

MAY 22 1953

# THE MONTH

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MAY 1953

**THE TRADITION  
OF CHRISTIAN MONARCHY**

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

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OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

BENEDICT STEUART

**INVESTITURE WITH THE REGALIA**

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# THE TRADITION OF CHRISTIAN MONARCHY

By  
CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

THE INSTITUTION OF MONARCHY is of unique importance in the development of European society. It is the only political institution which is older than Christendom, and has its roots in the prehistoric traditions of the Western World. Yet at the same time, it is the only political institution which has been officially adopted by the Church and sanctified by a solemn act of religious consecration.

This act is embodied in the coronation ceremony which was formerly common to the whole of Western Christendom, and was one of the most elaborate of the Church's rites. In its original form it was developed in the Carolingian Kingdom in the eighth and ninth centuries, and during the tenth century it became differentiated into three main types—the West Frankish, which represents the original Carolingian tradition, the German, as drawn up at Mainz in 961, which was subsequently adopted by the Roman pontifical, and the West Saxon, which was drawn up in the age of St. Dunstan, 960–973, and which has come down to us in two different recensions.

From these three rites which are closely related by origin and mutual influence and interaction, all the other coronation rites of Western Europe, with the exception of the Mozarabic rite, were derived. All of them are identical in spirit and character. All of them insist on the sacred character of the royal office, on the dependence of royal power on divine grace, on the reciprocity of rights and duties, and on the ministerial function of the king as the dispenser of justice and the defender of the Christian faith and the Christian people. It would not be difficult to show how this rite and the ideas which it represented not only increased the prestige of Christian monarchy, but also influenced its historic

development throughout the Middle Ages at least until the thirteenth century, when the idea of Christian kingship found its complete historic embodiment in the person of St. Louis. Thenceforward, however, European monarchy tended to diverge from this Christian archetype. The Renaissance and the Reformation combined to secularize kingship and to substitute the ideals of the Machiavellian Prince, and the enlightened despot for that of the divinely anointed leader of the Christian people.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the new monarchy became the dominant factor in European society. All over Europe from Versailles to St. Petersburg, and from Potsdam to Caserta, the palaces of the new monarchies arose like temples of a new religion. Even in their present derelict state they are still imposing, yet to me, at least, they seem more archaic and more psychologically inaccessible to our imagination than the ruined monasteries and castles of an earlier time.

The French Revolution was like an explosion which shattered the glass walls which protected the amazingly artificial life of the Bourbon courts from the impact of social reality. The institution of monarchy was not destroyed, but it assumed a new shape. The nineteenth century was the age of kings like Louis Philippe and Leopold I of Belgium, who regarded kingship neither as absolute power nor as a sacred office, but as a skilled profession which demanded hard work and specialized training. "A dangerous trade," as Alfonso XII is said to have remarked, "but a very well paid one."

In the course of the century, ancient monarchies like Spain and Denmark were refashioned on these lines, and new ones were created, so that for a time any able member of a princely family had a fair chance of founding a new dynasty. But these new dynasties were short lived. The Orleanist monarchy only lasted eighteen years. Even the German Empire, the greatest monarchical creation of the nineteenth century, did not endure for fifty years. At first sight it seemed as though the age of the two world wars was fatal to the existence of European monarchy. And yet the same time which has seen the great European empires and the new nineteenth-century constitutional monarchies involved in a common destruction, has also witnessed a revival of absolutism. This new power is entirely divorced from the historic tradition of European kingship. It is revolutionary,



ruthless and plebeian. Nevertheless, if monarchy is the rule of one, these new dictatorships are monarchies in a more absolute sense than the Christian kingdoms of the past or the constitutional monarchies of the nineteenth century.

But through all these successive changes which have transformed the political life of Europe, the English monarchy has retained its ancient character and is still bound to the Christian past by an unbroken historical tradition. Alone among Western rulers, the English king is still anointed and crowned with the ancient rites and sacred formulae that have come down almost intact for a thousand years from the days of the Anglo-Saxon kings and the Carolingian emperors. At first sight this survival seems like a miracle. One would have expected that the Reformation would have discarded this elaborate medieval rite as a relic of Popery, or else that the Whig revolution would have abolished it as inseparable from the doctrine of Divine Right which they abhorred.

Certainly its survival was not due to the absence of opposition, for England was in fact the first country in Europe to revolt against the institution of monarchy, and the trial and execution of the anointed king in 1649 represented a more daring defiance of tradition than even the execution of Louis XVI one hundred and forty years later.

Nevertheless, it may be argued that the death of Charles I did more to save the ancient tradition of kingship in this country than any victory of royal absolutism could have done. The defeat of Charles I was fatal to the ideal of the new monarchy, and made the development of an absolute monarchy on the continental pattern for ever impossible in England, but his execution actually strengthened the older tradition of Christian kingship by surrounding it with the halo of martyrdom. And it is a remarkable fact that the cultus of King Charles the Martyr, though it was the Protestant cultus of a Protestant king, did more than anything else to keep alive the authentic Catholic tradition of Christian kingship, at the very time when that tradition was giving way on the Continent to the neo-pagan cultus of the *Roi Soleil*.

Consequently, when the second English revolution took place in 1688, its leaders were careful to avoid the mistakes of their predecessors and to make as little change as possible in the

traditional form of the monarchy, while insuring the drastic limitation of royal power.

After the Revolution settlement and still more after the Hanoverian succession, there seemed little future for the idea of Christian kingship in Great Britain. The spirit of the age—the age of rational enlightenment—was against it, and this spirit was nowhere stronger than in the Whig oligarchy—among the Herveys and Walpoles and Chesterfields—who controlled the Court and the government, while the traditional sentiment of loyalty had been deflected from the reigning house to the exiled dynasty. Thus, the royal power, though still considerable, was weaker than in any other European country (except Poland), and it continued to diminish through the next two centuries, until the sovereignty of the people or their elected representatives became as complete in the United Kingdom as in any democratic republic.

Yet the moral and social position of the monarchy did not share in this political decline. On the contrary, it grew steadily stronger, until by the close of the nineteenth century it had recovered all that it had lost during the period of the English Revolution.

Thus the experience of the last centuries shows that the importance of monarchy does not depend on its political power. In fact it is not strictly a political institution since it represents those elements in the national life which transcend the political plane, but without which a purely political system cannot function satisfactorily.

In the first place, it is the organ of social unity, the focus of a common loyalty which transcends the bond that unites the members of a party to their political leader and is common to all parties, all classes and all economic interests.

It is, of course, possible to treat the political party itself as the organ of unity, but to do so is to create a party state, and the party state has an inevitable bias towards totalitarianism and the proscription of minority opinions. Nevertheless, no state can exist without a focus of loyalty, and if there is neither a king nor a totalitarian party, some substitute must be found, even if it is a purely symbolic one like the flag or an abstract one like the cult of nationality.

These are the normal modern solutions, and yet they are



obviously unsatisfactory since they necessarily tend to widen the gulf between the nations by emphasizing everything that distinguishes our own nation from the rest of the world and attributing an absolute value to their differential qualities.

But where the monarch is the centre of loyalty, this is not the case, at least to the same degree. The loyalty of the Englishman to Queen Victoria and that of the Austrian to the Emperor Franz Josef does not in itself involve any assertion of the superiority of Englishmen to Austrians or vice versa. Nor is monarchical loyalty necessarily bound up with the idea of nationality. In the old Austrian monarchy above all, and to some extent even in the British Commonwealth today, loyalty to the Crown and the person of the ruler transcends national and racial boundaries and provides a bond between peoples as well as between the individual members of a single nation.

At the present day, when nationalism has run riot from China to Peru, and no people is too civilized or too barbarous to be immune from its infection, the need for such a supranational principle of organization is greater than ever before. Here democracy is no remedy, since the democratic faith in the divine right of majorities and the attempt to unravel the tangled skein of history by the knife of a plebiscite only intensifies the violence of racial strife, as we have seen in recent years in the case of the Punjab. In the past, both in Central Europe and in Africa and Asia, the Crown stood above the bitterness of communal and racial strife, and the minorities could look to it for justice and protection. For the characteristic monarchical principles of impartial authority, personal loyalty, and the duty of the king to protect the weak against the strong are common to East and West. They are not the product of Western cultural influence or political indoctrination, like representative institutions and democratic ideals. They have been accepted without question for ages as the foundation of the state; and it is only when a government fails in its fulfilment of them that it forfeits the allegiance of its subjects, because it has already lost what the Chinese used to term *The Mandate of Heaven*.

And this brings us to the second and most vital function of kingship. For the function of the monarchy as the principle of social unity is in spite of its importance only a secondary one. Its primary function is moral: to be the living embodiment of

the principle of justice and the earthly representative of divine authority and power. The whole coronation ceremony is inspired by this conception. The king is anointed and crowned, invested with the sword of justice, the sceptre of power and justice, the rod of equity and mercy, the orb and the cross, in order to set him apart from other men as a sacred figure who is the living symbol of the moral principle on which the state stands.

This symbolism has, no doubt, lost much of its significance with the secularization of modern culture. The coronation rite is essentially a Catholic one, and it can only acquire its full significance in a Catholic society and culture. Nevertheless, as I wrote at the beginning of this article, this rite has a unique value as a proof of the continuity of our national life and culture with the Christian past, and as a public official national challenge to the secularization of the modern state.

The truths for which Christian kingship stand, the divine origin of power and the dependence of the state and the whole political order on God, are no archaic medieval survival, they are true for all times and peoples and political régimes. There is, of course, in principle, no reason why a Christian republic should not recognize this as fully as a monarchy by some ceremony of presidential inauguration which would assert as unequivocally as the English rite that as "the Orb is set under the Cross," so "the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer." But the fact remains that none of them—not even the most Christian—have done so. And consequently, while it is no doubt paradoxical that the full Catholic rite should be maintained only by a non-Catholic state in a secular culture, we can only be thankful to St. Edward and St. Dunstan that their tradition has been so strong that it has survived the successive crises of heresy and schism and revolution and secularism, so that the kingdom and crown of England are still set under the Cross and acknowledge their subjection to the Empire of Christ the King.

# THE CORONATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

By

BENEDICT STEUART

ON THE SECOND OF JUNE, this year of grace 1953, very many of her subjects of the United Kingdom and of the British Commonwealth will be able to assist (at least by means of wireless) at the anointing and coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. That venerable ceremony is the outward expression before the world of the dignity and high position of the sovereign. It is also, and above all, an expression of the need to call down upon the sovereign the blessing and help of Almighty God.

The Queen, as in the case of her predecessors in the British Monarchy, is the centre and living symbol of the unity binding together the many races, nations and peoples of which the Commonwealth is composed. But the sovereign is no mere symbolical character. Although our monarchy is "Constitutional," the personality of the king or queen is of very great importance in the life and for the development of Kingdom and Empire. Loyalty (and we may add chivalry, too, especially in the present case) is not only a figure of speech: it is a living thing, not a form. Loyalty and chivalry will be stirred up with especial force towards the lovely and charming young Queen, so bravely dedicating herself to the service of her people. Already she has won all hearts, and in her all recognize a worthy successor to the late King, her father, whose personal character as well as his devotion to public duty aroused the affectionate admiration of all under his rule.

The Coronation Rite, we have said, is a "venerable ceremony." It is, in truth, the link between the monarchy today and that of centuries past. It takes us back, in fact, to the very beginnings of the human race itself. In an invaluable work on the subject,

Dr. R. W. Woolley tells us that kingship is one of the most ancient institutions of civilization, and that a king was regarded as, in some sense, a sacred character, a representative of the Deity; sometimes priest as well as king; sometimes even considered to be, himself, divine. In consequence, we find that the accession of a king was accompanied with religious rites from very early times.<sup>1</sup>

In the revealed religion of Israel, the king was not a divine person, nor had he any share in the priestly office. But he was the representative of Yahweh, the God of Israel, in the civil order, as the High Priest was in the spiritual order. Kings in Israel on their accession were anointed with holy oil, as in the consecration of priests and prophets. They were solemnly invested with certain ornaments and with robes distinctive of their royal state—and this is true of other Eastern races. Of these royal ornaments, the crown, ring, bracelets and spear are mentioned in IV Kings, xi, 12; the full text is: "And he [Joiada, the High Priest] brought forth the king's son, and put the diadem [*i.e.*, the crown] upon him, and the testimony. And they made him king, and anointed him. And clapping their hands, they said: God save the king." According to Dr. Woolley, the Hebrew word translated above as "testimony," should probably be "bracelets": the Hebrew words for each are very similar and could easily be confused, and the word "testimony" in this place hardly makes sense. The "royal robes," too, are referred to in III Kings, xxii, 10-30, but no description of them is given.

In the Book of Esther (the Jewish wife of King Assuerus) it is said that the king "set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen" (Esther, ii, 17), and when she went in to see the king, she "put on her royal apparel." The king's "golden sceptre" is mentioned in a later chapter—held out towards the queen in sign of his readiness to receive her (v, 1 and 2).

In the Christian Church, the earthly king becomes the representative in the civil order of Christ the King Himself—Ruler of heaven and earth in His Sacred Humanity; "King of kings." It is only natural, then, that the ceremony of the consecration and coronation of kings and queens should be recognized and carried out by the authority of the Church of Christ. The Church recognizes the distinction between religious and civil authority

<sup>1</sup> *Coronation Rites* (Cambridge University Press, 1915), Chap. I, p. 1.

and the independence of each in its own sphere. But she reminds her children that *all* authority is from God, and also that the spiritual authority of the Church of God is above all earthly power. Hence, the ceremony attending the accession of Christian kings and queens is a solemn blessing and mark of approval bestowed by the Church in Our Lord's name upon the sovereign, reminding him that his sovereignty comes to him from Christ the true King, of whom he is the representative on earth in the civil order.

We have seen that in the Old Testament the Jewish kings were anointed with oil by the High Priest—or by a prophet, as in the case of Saul, anointed by Samuel (I Kings, x, 1) and later David, also (xvi, 13). Besides this anointing, the kings were crowned and invested with “royal apparel.”

In an interesting pamphlet written in preparation for the coronation of King George VI, of happy memory, Fr. Thurston, S.J., says that “it can hardly be doubted that the unctions [in the Christian ceremonial] had their origin in the traditions of the Old Testament.”<sup>1</sup> This is certainly what one would expect, since the Church of Christ has succeeded to and fulfilled in all things the Church of Israel. That the king or queen should be ceremonially crowned as well as anointed is also to be expected, since everyone knows that the crown is the symbol *par excellence* of the royal state. Everyone *knows* that this is so; but not everyone knows *why*, that is, what is the real significance of the royal crown. In its article on the crown, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* warns its readers against confusing the royal crown with the Latin *corona*, from which the English word “crown” is derived. *Corona* was the title given among the Romans to any type of wreath, whether of natural flowers or gold or of some special design. It was an *ornament*, not a mark of authority or power. The royal crown is derived from a simple band of white wool (later made of silk and embroidered, and finally becoming a circlet of gold) which was worn by priests round their heads and known as the diadem (from *diadema* in Greek, adopted in Latin). This word *diadema* means literally a bond or fetter; it was a symbol of the sacred bond by which the king bound himself to the service of his people in the holy covenant entered upon

<sup>1</sup> *The Coronation Ceremonial*, by Herbert Thurston, S.J., Catholic Truth Society, S.W.1.



at his accession. The same significance belonged to the ring—the wedding ring, for example, signifies the bond between bridegroom and bride—and also to the bracelets, necklace and anklets, sometimes forming part of the royal apparel. Head, neck, hands, arms and feet, the most important members of the human body, were thus consecrated to the service of his subjects by the king. The royal coronation and investiture with these ornaments was actually regarded as the “marriage” between the monarch and his subjects.<sup>1</sup>

In the wedding ceremony of the Byzantine Church, besides the use of the ring, golden crowns are held over the heads of both bridegroom and bride. In Norway, the bride wears a real crown (usually handed down in her family from early days) and in our own country some form of crown or wreath is worn by the bride. In what is sometimes known as the “Imperial Crown”—at first worn only by the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, but gradually adopted by all kings and queens—the circlet of the crown is worn round some form of cap or tiara, and from the circlet rise two or four (or more) golden, jewelled arches. These arches are united under a mound or orb (Latin *mundus* or *orbis*, “the world” or “earth”) from which rises a small cross;<sup>2</sup> in France, a fleur-de-lys. It has been suggested that this type of crown is derived from the Eastern tiara, a high cap with the diadem bound round its base, and that the arches, at first, were strips of embroidery to hide the seams in the cap (made of several pieces of material). These strips became bands of gold, were raised slightly above the cap, and, finally, made to spring from the circlet.

Another symbol of royal authority is the sceptre. In the English regalia there are two forms: the sceptre with the cross—a golden rod surmounted by mound and cross (the symbol of ruling power and direction), and the sceptre with the dove—surmounted by an ivory dove, symbol of the Holy Ghost, in token of the need of Divine Mercy in exercising judgment. In the French regalia, the second sceptre was known as the *Main de Justice*, and was surmounted by an ivory hand in the act of administering absolution and blessing. Besides the sceptres, there is the orb—a

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th edition), Vol. VII, article “Crown and Coronet,” pp. 515-18.

<sup>2</sup> Symbolical of the triumph of the Cross over the world.

large golden ball crossed with jewelled bands and supporting a jewelled cross. It is, in fact, a larger edition of the orb and cross on the sceptre described above. This has led some to think that the orb is merely a "double" of the sceptre with the cross. Others, however, believe it to be a conventionalized form of the *akakia* used in the coronation ceremonial of the Eastern Emperors.

The *akakia* was a small purple bag containing earth, which was placed in the Emperor's hand as a reminder that he was "of earth and to earth would return." This little ceremony is analogous to the rite of burning a tuft of tow fixed on a rod, which is borne before the Pope as he enters the basilica for his coronation, and which is accompanied with the words addressed to the Holy Father: "Pater sancte, sic transit gloria mundi."

Finally, there is St. Edward's Staff, carried before the king as he enters the Abbey Church. This is like a very long sceptre, with mound and cross on the top, but finished with an iron ferrule like a walking-stick; and it seems that it was actually used by the king originally as a walking-stick during the long procession on foot to the Abbey.

The king or queen, after the anointing, is invested with the Coronation Robes of brocaded cloth of gold. The sovereign enters the Abbey wearing the "Parliament Robe," a mantle of crimson velvet lined with ermine, and having a very long train. On his head the king wears the "Cap of Estate" or "of Maintenance,"<sup>1</sup> a low, round cap of crimson velvet, bordered with ermine. This head-dress seems to be identical with the similar cap worn inside the crown which was originally put on the king's head over it, and could be worn without it. The cap is not mentioned in England before the fifteenth century. But it may be derived ultimately from the Duchy of Normandy, as it seems to have been the distinctive ducal head dress. It is now worn together with a special form of coronet by all peers and peeresses at the king's coronation, after he has received his crown.

The solemn anointing of Christian kings and queens during the coronation ceremony was always considered in the Middle Ages to be the most important part of the whole rite. In France, the coronation rite was always called *Le Sacre du Roi*, "the Consecration of the King." This gave rise, in some cases, to the

<sup>1</sup> The word "maintenance" probably implies that this is a mark of the royal authority which must be "maintained."

theory that by the anointing the king received, as in some of the sacraments, a special "character" which admitted him to a share in the ecclesiastical state and made him a "sacred person." This theory (which was never officially accepted) has been put forward in our own days by advanced Anglicans, as a means of explaining and supporting the position of the sovereign as head of the English Church. This position was conferred upon him at the Reformation after Henry VIII had withdrawn the English Church from the authority of the Holy See. The anomaly of a layman possessing ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Church, above even its bishops, seems to be justified by this theory of his share in the priesthood (however vaguely that theory may be explained). Upholders of this strange idea usually support it by insisting upon the fact that in the medieval rite in England, the sovereign, besides being anointed on the breast, back, and both hands with the Oil of the Catechumens, was also anointed (as in episcopal consecration) on the head with that especially sacred oil, Holy Chrism. But it must be remembered that everyone who receives the sacrament of baptism according to the full ceremonial, is anointed upon the head with chrism. Again—as in episcopal consecration—anointing with chrism is also found in the sacrament of confirmation. The effect of this unction really depends entirely upon the particular sacrament administered and upon the nature of the character given to the recipient. It is only in the Sacrament of Holy Orders that a personal, individual share in the One Priesthood of Christ is conferred—in episcopal consecration, the *fullness* of that Priesthood and the power to confer it on others is received.

The royal unction is not a sacrament—it is only a *sacramental*. The sacraments, as we all know, confer grace *ex opere operato*, that is, from the proper administration and reception of the rite in itself; but a *sacramental* bestows grace only *ex opere operantis*, through the faith and piety of the recipient. The anointing certainly conferred special grace upon the king if he received it in the spirit of faith and filial submission to the Church, and it gave him special help in carrying out his arduous office and supporting his high position.

Besides the royal anointing, the special robes with which the king or queen is invested (after the unctions) have also been considered as proofs of the ecclesiastical position conferred by



them, and they have been regarded as being the same in origin and use as liturgical vestments. These coronation robes consist of a linen garment (*colobium sindonis*, "linen tunic"), which is compared with the alb; a long robe of cloth of gold (*supertunica*, "upper tunic"), said to be the same as the dalmatic; an ornament—now made and worn exactly like a stole—(the *armilla*, "bracelet"), and, finally, a great cloak of cloth of gold which is very like a cope in form, called the *Pall* or *Royal Robe*.

Dr. Woolley sums up the question of the supposed liturgical character of the coronation robes in a few lines: "The true fact . . . seems to be that both [that is, coronation robes and liturgical vestments] are descended from a common ancestor."<sup>1</sup> Each is an *independent* development and elaboration of Roman dress in the Christian era. Liturgical vestments (except, perhaps, the pallium—perhaps, also, the stole) are derived from the everyday dress of the Roman upper classes which, at first, was worn by clergy and laity alike, and by the former in liturgical ceremonies as well as in ordinary life. The coronation robes, says Fr. Thurston, "are derived from the state dress of the Roman consuls when presiding on official occasions, but there were modifications which resulted from the transference of the seat of Empire to Constantinople."<sup>2</sup> This state dress was itself only a more gorgeous form of everyday Roman costume. It was worn later by the Roman Emperor, who added the purple military mantle called *paludamentum* (originally a great square of material, clasped on the right shoulder, and not in the least like a cope), and the wreath or crown of golden laurel leaves. Probably these robes were originally worn by the early kings of Rome. Eventually they became the state dress of Christian kings. These robes consisted, first, of the long linen tunic worn by all at that period—this is the *colobium sindonis* of our coronation rite. Over this was worn an upper tunic of scarlet, embroidered with gold palm-branches—hence its title, *tunica palmata*. This is our *supertunica*.<sup>3</sup> Over all was the gorgeous *toga picta*—the typical Roman cloak, but, like the tunic, red in colour and covered with rich embroidery. Though at first sight it seems incredible, this voluminous and gorgeous garment is represented (or rather,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 181-7.

<sup>2</sup> *The Coronation Ceremonial*, etc., p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Queen Victoria's *supertunica* was actually embroidered with golden palm branches.

replaced) in the coronation robes by the *armilla*, the so-called "stole." The *toga picta*, in course of time, was gradually reduced in size and fullness by a process of folding or pleating known to the ancients as *contabulatio* (literally, "making into planks," or flat, narrow pieces). This process transformed the toga from a cloak into a wide scarf, and, finally, into a flat narrow band of material, which was called in Greek *loros* or *loron*, meaning a strap or thong. This is the origin of the so-called "coronation stole." The name given to it in England—*armilla*—is baffling! But at least it tends to show that bracelets were also worn, at one time, by kings in England as in other nations. As a matter of fact, too, a pair of gold, enamelled bracelets are still preserved among other articles of the regalia in the Tower of London. These, like the other ornaments, were made by order of Charles II, to replace the regalia destroyed by the Parliamentarians in the time of the Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup> Why they were disused is quite unknown.

The coronation robes are primarily intended for a king—a man. In the case of a queen, a certain amount of adaptation is needed, as far, at least, as the vesting during the ceremony is concerned. At the coronation of our last reigning Queen, Victoria, it appears that Her Majesty came to the Abbey already wearing under her Parliament Robe the *colobium sindonis* of white linen (adorned with deep flounces of lace!) and the *supertunica* of cloth of gold, made in the style of a lady's coat of the period, open in front and with wide sleeves hanging in long points from the elbows. Hence, during the ceremony, the Queen was invested only with the *armilla* and the *Pall*. Portraits of Victoria in her coronation robes show the former very clearly hanging down to well below the knees, like a long stole, and adorned with a cross on each fringed end.

The ceremonial of the coronation has been carried out with very few changes since the coronation of William and Mary, and, in substance, is the same as the medieval rite. This latter is found in the *Liber Regalis*, a document of the fourteenth century, still kept in honour at Westminster Abbey. The rite given in the

<sup>1</sup> A possible explanation of the term *armilla* given to the *lorus* (the Latin form of the Greek word) may be found in the fact that, from the time of Henry VII to James II, the *lorus* reached only as far as the elbows, and was secured by silken laces to the King's arms on each side.

*Liber Regalis* is the most elaborate form of the English coronation (the earliest form dates from the tenth century).<sup>1</sup> It was last used in Latin by Queen Elizabeth I. For James I, it was translated into English, and on the occasion of each of his successors (after Charles I) certain minor changes have been introduced. For a Catholic, the most *important* change is the substitution of the Anglican Communion service for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass,<sup>2</sup> and the anointing of the sovereign by a prelate who has never himself received any anointing! Nevertheless, however imperfectly in Catholic eyes, the grace and blessing of God is still called down upon our kings and queens—a public recognition of God, in spite of the decay of Faith which is so evident all around us.

In spite of these feelings of regret with regard to what is lacking in the coronation ceremonial, the sentiments of respect and interest which such a historical occasion must arouse in all loyal subjects of the Queen will not be lessened. Her Catholic subjects, especially, will respond with all their hearts to the request made so earnestly by Her Majesty in her Christmas broadcast that all should help her with their prayers on the day of her coronation.

<sup>1</sup> The Pontifical of Egbert, Archbishop of York, in A.D. 766. The text, however, dates only from the tenth century.

<sup>2</sup> In the Pontifical of Egbert, the anointing and coronation takes place *during* the Mass, between the Gospel and the Offertory. During the Middle Ages (according to the *Liber Regalis*) the coronation ceremony was *followed* by the Mass. For the "modern rite," if we can call it that, a return has been made (probably quite unintentionally) to the arrangement of Egbert's Pontifical. After the entry and "Recognition" of the King or Queen, the Communion Service is begun, and after the Gospel, Creed, and sermon (it is recommended that this should be very short!) the Communion Service is resumed at the Offertory—at which the King and his consort make an offering at the altar of bread and wine.

# INVESTITURE WITH THE REGALIA

By

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

THE LATIN WORD *corona* did not at first signify a royal crown. It was the equivalent of the Greek *στέφανος*, the circlet of leaves worn by the victors in the public games. This was the corruptible crown which St. Paul contrasts with the incorruptible one.<sup>1</sup> The emblem of royalty in the ancient East was the *διάδημα*, or diadem, in Latin the same word, which was a fillet of silk, linen or wool, set with jewels, worn round the head. As other classes of men were distinguished by special forms of dress so this was the distinguishing mark of rulers. Josephus<sup>2</sup> tells us how on the death of the High Priest, Hyrcanus I, his eldest son, Aristobulus, "intending to change the government into a kingdom, first of all put a diadem on his head. . . ."

From the diadem of antiquity the crowns of medieval and modern Europe were derived, after the jewelled ornaments with which they were set became fused so as to form a continuous circle. The earlier medieval English kings wore an open crown; the arched crown subsequently in use appears to date from the fifteenth century. Royal crowns have for many centuries past been made of gold but exceptions are the celebrated iron crown of Lombardy, made, according to a pious tradition, from the nails by which Our Lord was fastened to the Cross, and the modern crown of Rumania fashioned from guns captured from the Turks at the Battle of Plevna in 1877. The crown has become among European peoples the most important of the symbols of kingship and investiture with the regalia is called a "coronation." In Hungary the coronation ceremony retained till the end of the monarchy an especial significance; for the king could not exercise his prerogatives till he had been crowned with the holy crown

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. XIII, cap. xi.

of St. Stephen, and should he die before the ceremony his name would be struck off the list of kings. The crown of St. Stephen consists of two crowns, one given by Pope Sylvester II to St. Stephen, the first King of Hungary, in A.D. 1000, and the other presented by the Byzantine Emperor, Michael Ducas, to King Geisa in 1073. In 1784 the Hapsburg Emperor, Joseph II, caused great offence to the Hungarians by causing the crown of St. Stephen to be removed to Vienna where it remained for six years. On its return to Presburg, the then capital of Hungary, it was received with public rejoicing, triumphant arches being erected in its honour. The territories of the former Hungarian kingdom were known as the Lands of the Sacred Crown, and a Hungarian magnate was a "*membrum sacrae coronae*."

In general, however, the European coronation rites are rather ratifications of an election already made or of a recognition accorded than actual king-making ceremonies. Perhaps coronations originated in spontaneous actions. When Julian the Apostate was proclaimed Emperor at Paris in A.D. 360 a standard-bearer named Maurus took off the gold torc which he was wearing and placed it on the head of the newly-elected ruler. When Europe became Christian the putting on of the crown came to be preceded by a ceremonial anointing, borrowed, of course, from the Old Testament. This gave rise to the popular idea that an unanointed and uncrowned monarch was not yet a true king, an idea which expressed itself in the fact that the Kings of France, until the twelfth century, unlike those of England, counted their reigns from the date of their coronation. "*Le roi dormoit*," said the old jurists and chroniclers of the period preceding the coronation. Writing, however, early in the reign of Louis XV, N. Menin tells that in his day French kings were recognized independently of all ceremony of investiture and that their anointing was a public ratification of their right to mount the throne of their ancestors and created a spiritual alliance between the king and his realm.<sup>1</sup> But whatever juridical theory might lay down popular instinct would not always endorse. Renan tells us that in his youth there were Bretons found to maintain that Louis-Philippe, who had been neither anointed nor crowned, had no more right

<sup>1</sup> *Traité historique et chronologique du sacré et couronnement des rois et des reines de France*, Paris, 1722, p. 177.



to exercise the functions of a king than had one who was unordained to exercise those of the priesthood.<sup>1</sup>

The most famous of the European coronation rites was that of the Holy Roman Emperor. Till his coronation the Emperor was only prayed for in the liturgy as "Emperor elect." Otto the Great and his successors underwent four different coronations in the four capitals of their empire. At Aachen or Aix-la-Chapelle, the old Frankish capital, they were crowned Kings of the Franks. At Monza, Milan or Pavia, they were crowned Kings of Italy or Kings of the Lombards. Some of them also separately assumed the crown of Burgundy or of the kingdom of Arles. But the most important of these ceremonies was, of course, the coronation by the Pope in Rome. In addition to being crowned the Emperor was invested with the orb, and with Charlemagne's sword and gold sceptre. The orb was at the imperial coronations carried by the Count Palatine of the Rhine. It was called the *pomum imperiale*. It probably symbolized the vault of Heaven. The sceptre, which John Selden in his *Titles of Honour* says was regarded as "an ancients ensigne of a king than the crown or diadem is," was probably a staff which in early times was put to a ceremonial use. For neither in Greek nor in Latin was the word sceptre (*σκῆπτρον*, *scipio*) used exclusively of a royal emblem. It was, however, associated with the kingly office as far back as the time of Homer. The Emperor was also invested with a ring. The last Emperor to be crowned in Rome was Frederick III, who received the imperial crown from Pope Nicholas V in 1452. In 1530 Charles V, the last Holy Roman Emperor to do so, came to Italy to be crowned; but the ceremony took place in the Church of San Petronio in Bologna, Clement VII being unwilling that Charles should proceed to Rome.

During the last centuries of the Empire the emperors were not crowned. In the "Kaisersall" of the Römer at Frankfurt they dined with the electors and then appeared on the balcony to show themselves to the people. The young Goethe witnessed this ceremony on the occasion of the election of Joseph II.

With the exception of Henri Quatre who was crowned at Chartres, the Kings of France were for many centuries anointed and crowned at Rheims. The most famous in this long line of coronations was that of Charles VII, brought about by the action

<sup>1</sup> *Questions Contemporaines*, 1866, p. 434.

of Ste. Jeanne d'Arc. The French regalia included the crown said to have been given to Charles the Great by Pope Leo III, his sword called "Joyeuse," a sceptre six feet high, the hand of justice and Charlemagne's spurs. Before being crowned the French kings were anointed with oil said to have been brought from Heaven by a dove in a vessel called the *sainte ampoule*. At the time of the Revolution this vessel was destroyed, but it is said that some of the holy oil was preserved by the action of a Constitutional priest. What purported to be it was placed in a new vessel resembling the old *sainte ampoule* and used at the coronation of Charles X in 1825, the only coronation to take place at Rheims since that of Louis XVI. Napoleon I was crowned at Notre Dame in 1804. After he had been anointed by Pius VII who had come to Paris for this purpose, he seized the crown from the altar and placed it on his own head. In the following year he was crowned King of Italy at Milan with the iron crown of Lombardy, which on its journey from Monza to Milan Cathedral was accompanied by an escort of the Old Guard while a salvo of artillery was fired in its honour. Louis XVIII was never crowned, nor, as has been mentioned, was Louis-Philippe. France's last monarch, Napoleon III, contemplated asking Pius IX to come to Paris to crown him. The Pope seems to have been not irreconcilably opposed to such an idea provided that he could obtain some advantage for the Church by acceding to it. But it was felt that if such were done he could not easily refuse to crown the Emperor of Austria as well, without causing the latter offence, and in the end the matter was dropped. An alternative plan was also suggested by which, instead of the Pope coming to Paris, Louis-Napoleon should go to Rome to receive the imperial crown. But the Emperor remarked that in view of the disedifying life he had lived in Rome as a young man in the days of his exile, he feared the sarcastic comment which would be aroused if he were to return for the purpose of being anointed by the Pope.

The revolutions and civil wars of the nineteenth century had a debilitating effect on the old conception of kingship. The idea of a "citizen king," born of the early stages of the French Revolution, replaced that of the "Lord's Anointed." In most of the new monarchies such as Belgium, Greece and Italy, no coronation ceremony was introduced. In Spain, where the crown was contended for by rival factions, it fell into desuetude. The

only Catholic coronation ceremony to survive into recent times was in Hungary, whose last king was crowned in 1916. In long-drawn-out splendour no other coronation ceremony equalled that of the Russian Tsars. This ceremony, which took place not in the imperial capital at St. Petersburg but in Moscow, the old capital, was enacted for the last time in 1896. A coronation which might have rivalled it in spectacular effect and perhaps transcended it in political importance nearly took place in 1912, when during the First Balkan War the Bulgarian army nearly occupied Constantinople, being only prevented by a thick fog from doing so. The King of Bulgaria is believed to have placed an order with a London jeweller for a crown which he meant to wear as successor to the Byzantine emperors.

In Protestant Europe coronation ceremonies survived the Reformation not only in England. The Kings of Sweden continued to be anointed and crowned at Uppsala, though the Swedish coronation has now been discontinued. The Norwegian coronation takes place in Trondhjem Cathedral. It was omitted in the case of Oscar I (King of Sweden and Norway) because the Queen was a Catholic and the Lutheran Bishop was unwilling to perform the ceremony. When the Electors of Brandenburg became Kings of Prussia a coronation ceremony took place at Königsberg, the last occasion being in 1861. The last two Kings of Prussia were not crowned.

Though the coronations of the English kings were rather ratifications of a choice already made and of a recognition already conceded, there persisted an instinct that a crowned monarch's position was more secure than that of an uncrowned one. In the days of Jacobite activity Queen Anne was crowned eleven days after the burial of William III. When George III came to the throne the Hanoverian line was considered sufficiently established to make it safe to delay the coronation for a whole year after the king's accession, as has been the case on each subsequent occasion. It was the first of the coronations which was treated as a public spectacle. "Never," says Lord Mahon, "had there been greater eagerness among all classes of the people to behold the gorgeous pageant. Thus the platform from St. Margaret's round-house to the church door, which at George II's coronation had been let for £40, produced at this no less than £2,400." The long procession to the Abbey, of which there is an interesting



picture in the *Annual Register* for 1761, proceeded at a leisurely pace being led by the King's herb-woman and maids scattering herbs in the royal path. Sixty years later George III's eldest son was crowned and much of the feudal ceremonial was enacted for the last time. The coronation banquet in Westminster Hall, at which the King's Champion rode in on a charger, was never subsequently repeated. When William IV and Queen Adelaide were crowned on 8 September, 1831, the wind of Revolution was blowing over Europe, and even at home there were those who asked whether the coronation ritual was not out of date. "What," asked *The Times* in a leading article the day after the ceremony, "can be more revoltingly compounded of the worst dregs of Popery and feudalism, than a prodigious number of the quackeries played off in the course of King William's coronation? What a fuss with palls, ingots and spurs, swords and oil for anointing (greasing) their sacred Majesties! and whipping on and off of mantles and all the rest of it." The leading London journal went on to suggest that at the next coronation the ceremony should be recast. Yet *The Times's* protest was made in spite of the fact that the coronation of William IV was sarcastically dubbed a "churchwarden coronation," so simple had it been in comparison with that of George IV. In place of the traditional state banquet in Westminster Hall there was only a quiet family dinner in the evening.

When the next coronation came in 1838 the ceremony was not recast as *The Times* had hoped, but the rite was again performed in its traditional style. The function lasted four hours since each peer did homage instead of as on subsequent occasions only the premier member of each order of the peerage. Outside the Abbey the occasion was remarkable for the warm welcome given by the crowd to Marshal Soult, England's old antagonist in the Peninsular War, who had come over as representative of the French King. No one was more surprised than the old Marshal himself. After the coronation of Queen Victoria there was not another one for sixty-four years, the longest such interval in English history.<sup>1</sup> In that time feudal England had receded into

<sup>1</sup> A novel feature of the coronation of 1902 was that the ceremony of crowning the Queen consort was performed by the Archbishop of York, Archbishop Frederick Temple being in too frail health to stand the strain of the double ceremony. At the next coronation in 1911 Archbishop Davidson refused to allow this to be made a precedent.

the past to a degree greater than the mere lapse of years would itself indicate. But the coming of the machine age, though it has made the coronation ceremonial seem archaic, has enriched its historical significance by making more eloquent its evocations of the past. With the enormous growth of London and increased facilities for home and foreign and overseas travel, such of the pageantry of the last three coronations as can be witnessed by those outside the Abbey has been seen by larger crowds than those who watched it in earlier centuries. More recent inventions will have brought it closer to those in remote parts of the earth.

# CORONATION NOTES

By

SIR SHANE LESLIE

**T**HE MEMORIES OF PAST CORONATIONS fill our thoughts at this time; what we remember and what our fathers and their fathers beyond them have handed down. Personally I was present in the Abbey during the coronation of King George VI, and witnessed the protest of the brilliantly attired Barons of the Cinque Ports who were displeased at their seats (which were immediately in front of me) and, demanding their ancient privilege to witness the actual Incoronation of the Monarch, left their seats at a given signal and proceeded out of the Nave to the Screens, to which they remained fixed in spite of the excited Goldsticks, who, of course, dared not remove them. The Barons of the Cinque Ports have the traditional right of carrying the canopy over the sovereign. In this case they stood their ground, and as the crowned sovereigns passed out of the Abbey they raised their magnificent hats with unrehearsed and dramatic effect.

The Coronation of Edward VII remains in my schoolboy memories, for it was during the Eton and Winchester match that the dread news was passed that the King was seriously ill and the ceremony itself postponed. Thereby hung anxieties such as no organizers and Earls Marshal have ever suffered. My uncle, the late Sir Edward Hope, was Clerk to the Court of Claims, and thereby we heard many interesting incidents, including the claim of Dymoke of Scrivelsby to ride in full armour as King's Champion. I think in the end he was allowed to carry the Standard of England. Through the late J. E. C. Bodley, the historian of France and essayist of Cardinal Manning, we heard much more of dramatic interest. Mr. Bodley had been appointed official historiographer of the scene, and not only attended all the rehearsals but witnessed the postponed ceremony from behind the tomb of Richard III. We learnt thus of the astonishing

impasse which had been reached when the King fell ill and passed into danger of death.

A great embarrassment had arisen which was really relieved by the King's illness. All had gone well in the ceremonial rehearsals, but two matters of considerable anxiety were worrying folk behind the scenes.

First, would the aged and moribund Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, live to carry out his office, and would he be strong enough to lift the crown?

Secondly, Her Majesty Queen Alexandra had flatly declined to receive the Holy Communion in spite of the ordinance of the Church of England. Her reasons were well within the injunctions of the State Prayer Book. She was willing to submit to every possible ritual and ceremony, but she felt that she could not receive "the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ" publicly with her husband in the sight of God. It was a matter of the utmost delicacy, for she believed the King's life, of which she made no criticism, did not permit them to receive Communion together on this supreme occasion of their lives. She was prepared to undergo every most wearisome detail of the ceremony, but she refused to incur what her conscience told her would be sacrilege. Her scruples did her the utmost credit, for she was deeply and simply religious, as the High Church and Catholics always recognized. Under these difficult circumstances what was to be done? It was not for the Archbishop of Canterbury to say that the Communion was only a traditional ceremony and like the Mass "a fond fable" or something invented by men. It was not for the deeply devout Earl Marshal, the late Duke of Norfolk, to remonstrate. It was not for the pious Lord Halifax, once the King's closest friend, to persuade the Queen, for he himself had threatened not to be present because the Altar was to be boarded over to assist the sight-seeing of the pageantry.

What then happened?

Like a clap of thunder the King's sudden illness was announced. It was as though the Divine Majesty had spoken, and the Queen's prayers were turned in supplication for his recovery. His life, at one time despaired of, was granted by the Almighty and the Queen felt she no longer had reason to refuse partaking of the consecrated elements with a King whose life God had spared. The ceremony, postponed from June until August, though shorn

of many pomps and of the foreign embassages, took place duly and happily.

Mr. Bodley's magnificent volume contained not only the history of the crowning of Edward VII but a majestic record of all coronations, which has made it as rare a book as it is valuable. Incidentally, it contained a long and accurate list of all persons present, including the surviving daughters of Thackeray and Dickens.

The lists, which were compiled with the Earl Marshal's authority, certainly omitted some names, such as those of the King's private box, to which he invited ladies and gentlemen who had been companions in the days of "Prince Hal," as Disraeli always called the pleasure-loving Prince of Wales. These guests were, of course, unofficial, and to those who worked behind the scenes their enclosure was known as "the loose box."

There can be few survivors of the Coronation of Edward VII save such as the Marquess of Winchester and the Duke of Alba, and some of the pages, like Lords Portarlington and Caledon.

Of the first great anxiety to the officials, Mr. Bodley recorded that happily Archbishop Temple succeeded in placing the crown, though he nearly collapsed owing to his legs, not owing to his head, as he plaintively called out. In the Traverse, Temple would have pulled down the King, had he not been held up by the Bishops of Winchester and Bath and Wells. It was in some ways a staggering service.

Mr. Bodley pointed out the Catholic texture of the whole service. "It is modelled on the form for the consecration of a Bishop." The whole question of the use of the Holy Oil is interesting, for the Unction of Anglican Bishops ceased with the Ordinal of 1550. The last English Bishop properly oiled was under Mary, Christopherson of Chichester in 1557. Elizabethan Bishops were unoiled, but the very Scriptural use of Unction was reserved for coronations. The actual word henceforth became merely a metaphorical description of a peculiar mannerism in the pulpit and elsewhere.

For this reason, since the sovereigns received the Unction of which their Bishops were deprived, they claimed a certain Divine Right which eventually brought them into conflict with their servants and subjects. "The Sovereign alone has the oils and mystical powers more complete even than those conferred on the

Episcopal Order" (Bodley, p. 279, referring to the Anglican Bishops).

The Catholic sentiment, if not the reality, pervades the whole sublime service. Catholics feel how deeply rooted the monarchy is in their traditions. What veritable relics survive!

The sovereign will be seated in King Edward's Chair and hold Saint Edward's Staff. "Saint Edward the Confessor, pray for her!" Her crown is St. Edward's. Take the "Honours of Scotland," preserved in Edinburgh Castle. The Sceptre was given by Pope Alexander VI to James IV, and the Sword of State by Pope Julius II to the same ancestor of our present sovereign.

In the Imperial Crown is set the great sapphire from the holy Confessor's ring, and there should yet be a piece of the True Cross in the orb on the top of the crown.

The central Mass on which the service once pivoted, of course, is represented by the Holy Communion received by the newly crowned. The conferring of the Pallium is represented by the clothing of the sovereign in the Armill. The ancient ecclesiastical chanting has given place to Handel, the Court musician of the Hanoverian dynasty. The only Latin to survive is the applauding *Vivats* of the Westminster schoolboys, representing the assent of the people which was part of the ancient rite.

Alas, that the famous cross of gold, which hung for centuries round the Confessor's neck, does not survive! It was poked out of the decaying shrine in the Abbey by an inquisitive Westminster schoolboy and secured as a relic by James II, who unfortunately lost it in Wapping during his flight from London.

However anglicized the ceremony has been made, it will always be based on Egbert's eighth-century York Pontifical, *Missa pro Rege in die Benedictionis eius*. Of the sixty items mentioned no less than thirty survived in the *Liber Regalis* used from Edward II till Charles I, such as:

The Assent of the People,  
The Anointing,  
The Delivery of Insignia,  
The Imposing of the Crown,  
The Holy Communion,  
The Homage of Nobility.

Such items as the delivery of the Bible came in with William of Orange and Mary. The three swords included the purely



symbolic sword of the clergy, the *Curtana* or pointless sword, betokening Mercy, tempering Justice, and the great Sword of Estate.

However ecclesiastical the Catholic ritual, it is important to deny that the Holy Roman Emperor became a priest in its course. According to Martène, when the Pope sang the Coronation Mass, the Emperor did read the Gospel at the altar, and the King of France the Epistle. The Emperor actually became a Canon of Lateran and St. Peter's, while the French sovereign became the first Canon of the primatial See of Lyons, but the "mixed person" of priest and ruler was not conferred. As a result of the chrism conferred on the Kings of England and France, both used to touch for "the King's evil," in other words divinely heal erysipelas. The last Stuart sovereign, Queen Anne, touched the young Samuel Johnson for this reason.

Around the chrism arose medieval legends which the Church does not sustain. France relied on the oil from *la Sainte Ampoule*, said to have been brought from Heaven for Clovis. This oil was mixed with the chrism.

England relied on a vision of the Blessed Virgin, who appeared to St. Thomas à Becket and gave him a vessel of holy oil, so that the English King was anointed with a mixture of oil and balsam.<sup>1</sup>

The English sovereigns sat before the ceremony on a marble chair in the King's bench wearing a Cap of Estate before being taken by the Bishops of Bath and Durham to the Abbey and being vested with a dalmatic. The stole and royal mantle followed. The ring was placed on the wedding finger. The sovereign of England received the Sacrament in one kind, but the Holy Roman Emperor had the sublime privilege of receiving the Cup.

Whatever changes came with the Reformation, James II, being in communion with the Holy See, insisted on others.<sup>2</sup> Charles I's Queen, Henrietta Maria, had refused to be consecrated from Catholic scruples. James II, her son, commissioned Archbishop Sancroft to cut out the Communion Service, which he could not receive in the Anglican rite. Mary of Modena was crowned with James II, the last Catholic sovereigns of the Realm. Sancroft was left to work his will on the service, and

<sup>1</sup> See the letter of Pope John XXII to King Edward II.

<sup>2</sup> See Macaulay and Evelyn.

his successor in the Abbey, Bishop Compton of London, tinkered further. Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, to his great credit was a Nonjuror and refused to take the Oath to William of Orange as a usurper.

In the old days there were three *Precepta*, or promises, which had to be taken by oath to gain the Church's blessing. "I promise in all Dooms Justice and Mercy."

With William and Mary not only the Bible was introduced, but the three questions were proffered by the Archbishop introducing the Protestant Reformed Religion as established by law.

The sovereign was now entirely a puppet of the State, the Divine Right was abolished and the kingly character became even less a *mixta persona* (priest and king) than ever. This was so in spite of what is said by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (in its eleventh edition).

Little changes occurred all down the line. Henry VII and Henry VIII enjoyed Catholic coronations, and both communicated wearing their crowns, but George III laid aside the crown, which has been the custom ever since.

Edward VI was kissed papally on the foot as well as on the cheek. All the Lords Spiritual kissed George IV on the cheek at the last great coronation in the full manner. Archbishop Howley, who crowned Queen Victoria, had crowned William IV. He kissed the Queen's hand only in token of all the Bishops. It is history how Edward VII insisted on modifying the unpleasant terms of the Coronation Oath.

Till the advent of George II, the Lord Chancellor offered a General Pardon, which had come down the ages. This princely largess has now become a distribution of commemorative medals.

The Bible was the chief modern novelty, but Macaulay is wrong when he says it was introduced into the service with the Reformation, because Edward VI is recorded to have pointed to the three swords and remarked that the Sword of the Spirit was lacking. The Bible only came in with William and Mary, though it is true that a Bible and a sword were handed to Cromwell in Westminster Hall, whither King Edward's Chair was taken for his regicidal benefit. All the ancient Regalia, except the spoon for the sacred oil, had been broken up by the Puritans.

The succession of coronations has not been smooth, especially when the sovereigns were minors. Westminster Abbey itself has



not always been available. Henry III, at ten years of age, was crowned in Gloucester Cathedral by the Bishop of Winchester, and a second time by Archbishop Stephen Langton in Westminster. Richard II was eleven when crowned by Archbishop Simon of Sudbury. Edward V (the only uncrowned King of England till Edward VIII) was thirteen when brought by his uncle Richard Crookback to London and murdered in the Tower with his brother Richard of York. Crookback was crowned with Anne of Warwick by Archbishop Bourchier, who crowned three monarchs in his time.

Queen Elizabeth was crowned by the Bishop of Carlisle, no Canterbury being available. Mary Tudor was crowned by the Cardinal of Winchester.

A coronation is the greatest ceremony surviving in the Old World. Only the British and the Papal rites actually survive. Rheims has gone, Budapesth has gone, Moscow has gone. Scandinavian countries have allowed theirs to fall into abeyance.

The Pope is crowned, but, of course, without any need of Unction. Father Thurston has pointed out that the little chant sung by the Cardinal Deacon before the Epistle at the Pontifical Mass (*Exaudi Christi, Salvator Mundi, Tu illum adiuva*, etc.) has an extraordinary ancient origin.

Simple as this little chant may appear, it takes us back to the earliest years of Christianity and to the very heart of the Roman Empire. These *Laudes* by their direct descent from earlier forms, undoubtedly represent the acclamations of the populace as they were wont to be expressed in honour of the Emperors or of great Ecclesiastics from the second to the fifth century.

So the Westminster schoolboys will have as historical a part to play as the Archbishop on June 2nd. Their shouts will be similar to the *Laudes* addressed to the Emperor Charlemagne which Mgr. Duchesne printed in the *Liber Pontificalis*. The Pallium, which survives in the British coronation as the Armill, was the Pallium as given to the Popes at theirs, and descends from the official scarf worn by the Roman consuls. It is the *lorum* of a Papal coronation.

The whole service has always been a repository of antiquarianism. Until the time of George III, the Dukes of Normandy and Aquitaine walked in deputy before the sovereign as though those great French duchies were still under the Crown of England.

Under the French Crown, Aquitaine when passing to Louis the Pious gave him cause to be anointed by Pope Hadrian I, and later the same pious king was re-anointed by Pope Stephen IV as Emperor.

There is no trace in the British coronation of the public *memento mori* which is offered to the Pope, and in a different form to the Emperor, at their coronations. The scene is rather sublime in either case, whether the Pope is presented with burning straw and informed, "Holy Father, thus passes the glory of the world," or the Emperor is presented with certain precious stones with the words, "Excellent Prince, of what stone wilt thou thy tomb be made?"

Only the Catholic Church in her most pulverizing pantomimic mood could have devised such ceremonies.

An extraordinary piece of history was retained in the French coronation service. Under King John the French King invaded England and held Westminster Abbey. The barons elected the Dauphin as King of England (later Louis VIII). As a result "the Sceptre of the Saxons" was retained as a formulary in the French book until the time of Louis XIV.

For weeks the magazines will devote pages to antiquarian detail, and the British public may even acquire some liturgical knowledge in the course of their daily reading. It is worth while recording the difference between St. Edward's Chair and King Edward's Chair, which refers to King Edward I and the famous Stone of Destiny which he brought from Scone in Scotland. It would take many articles to discuss the origins and mystical meaning of this block of magical mineral.

Time has stripped Catholic Europe of much of her pageantry, but in Westminster Abbey will be preserved a simulacrum of much which has passed for ever, but also a great religious service upon which cannot fail to rest the Divine Blessing promised to the Lord's Anointed.

# QUEEN VICTORIA AT THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

By  
MICHAEL HANBURY

ON 8 OCTOBER, 1940, that darkest year of the last war, and at a time when his own country's fate hung very much in the balance, an English Carthusian monk, of long and varied experience in his Order, died at the *Certosa di Pavia*. Very many sons of St. Bruno must have died in this vast and splendid *Certosa* during the last five centuries and more, but he was perhaps destined to be the last; for, only a very few years later, the Carthusians renounced what had become their uneasy tenure of the building, which passed thereupon to the care of another Religious Order. It is doubtful if this need be regretted from the Carthusian standpoint, for it seems clear that the *Certosa* is better as a show place than for the purposes of a monastery.

Dom Edmund Gurdon, the monk who died in this gorgeous *Certosa*, set amidst the green, flat plain of Lombardy which he had always thought most monotonous, had begun his monastic life in very different surroundings, those of the wild alpine grandeur of Dauphiné; he had entered the Order as a boy of eighteen, at the Grande Chartreuse itself. Since then he could look back on fifty-eight years as a Carthusian, during nearly twenty of which he had been a prior. He had lived in charter-houses in four different countries: England, France, Italy and Spain—Spain especially, for he had spent there more than thirty years. Much more might be said of him—and, in fact, a good deal has been written about him in the pages of another Catholic periodical<sup>1</sup>—for besides being a holy monk, he was a man of marked and striking personality. Here, however, we are mainly concerned with the fact that in the last two or three years of his life he betook himself to the writing of memoirs (which happily

<sup>1</sup> *Pax*, Nos. 219-27 (Summer, 1941-Spring, 1943).

have been preserved), and especially with some information contained in part of them. Of the memoirs as a whole, Mr. Arthur Coles, who saw them some years ago, referred in a foreword to his *Spain Everlasting* (1945), to "reading this unpublished autobiography—a manuscript of a thousand pages, closely written in a beautiful hand and with hardly an excision or correction throughout. . . ." It will be seen from this that the memoirs are copious, and this estimate indeed is an understatement of their full length, for some time later, when after the war normal postal communications had been restored with Italy, the then Prior of Pavia sent the present writer a further six hundred pages that had been found in Dom Edmund's cell after his death. Internal evidence shows that he had written nearly four hundred and fifty pages of these memoirs in the last three months of his life, and in his Prior's opinion he had gone on writing them on the very morning of the day on which he died.

It was certainly an achievement for a man of his age and in rapidly failing health to have written so much and, as Mr. Coles says, with hardly an excision or correction. It suggests that the mantle of such Carthusian giants of literary industry as Dionysius and Lanspergius—accounts of both of whom Dom Edmund Gurdon had written many years earlier for the *Catholic Encyclopedia*—had to some extent fallen on his shoulders.

One may wonder what a Carthusian could find to write about. These memoirs—after Dom Edmund's entry into religion, that is—are largely concerned with Carthusian life itself, and with descriptions of the many monasteries the writer had lived in. He says something, too, of the surroundings of these monasteries and the people of the country round, and a good deal about various persons with whom he was brought into personal contact. As a writer he had a marked fondness for detail and was not seldom prolix. He had, too, lived abroad so long that he could often express himself more easily in French; nevertheless, though apt to be ponderous and repetitive, he wrote English well and smoothly, albeit in a manner that may now seem old-fashioned.

Naturally, the interest of his recollections varies considerably: there is a good deal of what might be called "guide-book stuff" in some of the descriptions of buildings. Naturally, too, one of the most attractive portions of his manuscript are the thirty pages or so devoted to his life at the Grande Chartreuse. This famous

motherhouse of the Order was always his monastic home of predilection, and he used to say many years later that he had never been so happy as he was when there. Moreover, this part of his memoirs gains a certain historic interest of a wider kind, for it includes a full and detailed record of Queen Victoria's visit to the Monastery in 1887, the year of her Golden Jubilee. The episode was much talked about at the time, and is still remembered; it has been described several times, but generally very inaccurately—sometimes quite surprisingly so. One certainly would not claim to know all that has been written on the subject, but still it seems highly probable that by combining Dom Edmund's account with that of the Queen herself as given in her journal, it will be possible to give a fuller and more accurate version than has ever yet found its way into print. This I shall try to do. I owe thanks to Mr. John Gurdon, D.F.C., Dom Edmund Gurdon's nephew, for lending me the part of the memoir that is here made use of, and I am indebted to Messrs. John Murray for permission to quote from *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, which they published.

I will as far as possible give Dom Edmund's account *in extenso*, adding comments where it seems useful to do so. He begins by saying that the Queen had planned to come two years before but had been prevented: he writes:

When the Queen came to Aix-les-Bains in 1885 she expressed the wish to visit the Grande Chartreuse and quite decided to do so, but first she got the Curé of Aix to write to Fr. General to ask whether she would be admitted within the precincts of the monastery. The answer was that she would be welcome and our doors would be opened to her. And Fr. General immediately wrote or wired to the Procurator General of our Order in Rome bidding him obtain the necessary permit from the Holy See. The Queen was free to enter any monastery in her own dominions with the consent of the local superior, but she could not enter any monastery elsewhere without special leave from Rome like any other woman. That leave is always granted in such cases, but it must be asked for and not taken for granted.

That time, however, the Queen did not come; she was prevented by I forget what political event in England which obliged her to return there post-haste. It was only two years later, 1887, the year of her Golden Jubilee as Queen, that she was at last able to fulfil her wish.



Queen Victoria had been at Aix-les-Bains in April 1885, arriving there on the first of the month and being still there on the 19th. Her return to England that time without visiting the Grande Chartreuse was probably due to the abandonment by the Government—strongly against her wishes—of the military expedition to Khartoum, where Gordon had fallen some three months earlier. In a confidential communication dated 28 April, the Queen said that for the last fortnight the matter had given her “terrible trouble and anxiety.”

Dom Edmund goes on:

The 23rd of April, feast of St. George, was the day fixed for the royal visit. We were of course warned beforehand and had plenty of time to get things ready for the occasion, sweeping and cleaning and tidying the entrance and entrance court, the cloisters and every part of the monastery which the Queen and her suite would be shown. I did the same in my cell, as Fr. General told me he would bring the Queen to see me there and therefore I was to wait for her there and not go to Vespers.

We may now switch over to the Queen's account of her expedition, as described in her journal,<sup>1</sup> where it runs to just over two large printed pages.

Aix-les-Bains, 23rd April, 1887. This was the day for our long-planned and wished-for expedition to the Grande Chartreuse. It was a splendid day. The scenery of the Gorge frequently reminded me of the St. Gothard, and is very grand. We passed the distillery of the celebrated and excellent liqueur called Chartreuse, made by the monks, who alone possess the secret. It is made of herbs and flowers gathered by them in the country around.

The Monastery nestles in among the high mountains. As we approached we could see a monk standing under the doorway, who approached our carriage in his white habit and cowl and bare shaven head, a fine-looking man, the Procureur, who wished us *la bienvenue*. Just inside the Monastery the Grand Prieur Général received us, a stout, burly, rosy-cheeked man, wearing spectacles. The interior struck one as very cold. . . .

The cold at the Grande Chartreuse struck everyone. Dom Edmund Gurdon described it as “simply Siberian,” and says that

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria*, edited by G. E. Buckle. Third Series, Vol. 1, pp. 299–302.



on coming out of Matins he sometimes did not know whether he had hands or feet or not. According to Carthusian tradition, he wrote, "none of what we called in monastic language the 'regular places' were ever warmed. There was no calefaction of any sort in the church, the chapels, the chapter-house, the cloisters, the refectory, nor in the large hall of the general chapter where we had our recreations on Sundays and festivals: we shivered everywhere." Yet he goes on to say that no one complained of the cold; it was simply taken as a matter of course. It may be added that such extreme rigour no longer obtains. When monks returned to the Grande Chartreuse in 1940 after their long exile of nearly forty years, they found that the French Government had installed heating in the church, and it has since been retained. No doubt the Queen, on this occasion, was very warmly clad for her long drive through the mountains—if the party drove the whole way from Aix-les-Bains the distance can hardly have been less than twenty-five miles—or she might have found the temperature of the Chartreuse unbearable.

Let Dom Edmund continue:

She arrived shortly before the hour of Vespers (3 p.m.). Fr. General greeted her at the entrance and led her and her retinue to one of the halls of the Guesthouse and there presented to her those of the community officials whose usual business it was to deal with outsiders and attend to visitors, one of them being the famous Baron Nicolai, the Russian general. . . .

The Queen was accompanied by her daughter, Princess Beatrice, the latter's husband, Prince Battenberg, her private secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, her reader (a lady), and a pretty numerous retinue, amongst which two kilted Highlanders were noticeable.

The visit of the monastery began immediately. The Queen, with P. Beatrice, P. Battenberg, and Fr. General went on in front, while the rest of the retinue escorted by the four officials formed a second group that followed close behind. They visited the various parts of the monastery usually shown to visitors. Ordinary visitors see the church from the visitors' tribune placed above the lay-brothers' choir at the west end of the church; they are not allowed to enter the choir down below. An exception, however, would have been made in favour of the Queen and her suite, had not the monks been singing Vespers at the time she reached the church. So she and her suite were led to the tribune. By that, however, they gained rather than lost, since a much better general view of the interior

of the church can be got from the tribune than down below in the choir, and as for the singing, it was heard to much better advantage from the tribune than down in the choir.

The Baron Nicolai mentioned above by Dom Edmund is also mentioned by the Queen, who says: "We were led along the cloisters, which are immensely long, into a room in which were assembled several of the other principal monks who were introduced to us. Amongst them was a Russian General Nicolai, who had served in the Caucasus, and had also been attached to the Embassy in London. He had been a monk at the Grande Chartreuse for nineteen years." Not here, but elsewhere, in an article he wrote on the Grande Chartreuse,<sup>1</sup> Dom Edmund has more to say of this remarkable man. Telling of a monk whose leg was badly injured by a rolling stone, he proceeds: "He was the celebrated Russian general, known in the world as Baron Nicolai, who, after fighting the Czar's battles in the Caucasus against Schamyl and his insurgents, was received into the Catholic Church and soon after became a monk at the Grande Chartreuse." He gives a long account of the Baron's accident, which led to his being two or three nights in a hollow on the mountain side, before he was found by a search party. Probably Nicolai—Dom John Louis Nicolai, in religion—is best remembered in the Order for having acquired, in his former character of a Russian aristocrat, the land on which Parkminster was built. It was thought that the owner might be unwilling to sell if he knew the estate was wanted in order to build a monastery on it; hence the disguise.<sup>2</sup>

The Queen mentions "going into the Gallery, which overlooks the Chapel, where Vespers were going on," but makes no comment on the singing. Then the party went to the Chapter Room, "a large room full of pictures depicting events in the life of St. Bruno and the portraits of the various Généraux." Then they passed to the "very pretty small Chapel of St. Louis with mosaics, and a fine large newly finished Library." The cemetery was what pleased Her Majesty least—"The Grand Prieur showed us the burial-ground, most dreary-looking and small, with flowers, and little low stone crosses, only for the

<sup>1</sup> *Pax*.

<sup>2</sup> Dom John Louis Nicolai was born at Copenhagen, 19 January, 1820. First profession (as Carthusian) 8 September, 1869. Solemn vows exactly four years later. Died at Grande Chartreuse, 2 February, 1891.

Généraux. The other poor monks had nothing but flowers over them. Some snow was lying there, in the garden, which was quite hard frozen, and yet the sun was burning hot."

The Queen's comments strike one as rather colourless, perhaps, but it is something that she said nothing unfavourable of the life. If she felt any deep emotion at the austerity, silence, profound solitude and historic past of the monastery, it was not allowed to show itself in her journal. Very likely her inherent Protestantism made her guard her feelings from being at all carried away by what she probably believed, at bottom, to be a mistaken way of life. As a matter of fact there was real need for caution. Testimony to this comes from a then young American convert, Mr. F. A. MacNutt by name, who happened to be in London at the time. In his autobiography<sup>1</sup> published fifty years later, he wrote apropos the Queen's visit to the Grande Chartreuse, "Quite a stir was caused in Low Church circles in England by accounts describing the Queen as having comported herself in a fashion unbecoming a Protestant Sovereign, the official head of the National Church by law established."

MacNutt himself was evidently keenly interested in the matter, for on leaving England in the following autumn, he went first to Aix-les-Bains, and from there he himself made an expedition to the Grande Chartreuse. Evidently he wanted to know what had really happened at the Queen's visit, and set about it with transatlantic thoroughness. He interviewed the Abbot [*sic*] and also, he says, the young English monk the Queen had conversed with, and in his own opinion obtained all the facts. He concludes: "Such was the true account of that visit; I wrote it all to Cardinal Manning and to Father Kenelm [Vaughan]. The hubbub in England died down, and no more was heard of the Queen's imaginary sympathies with the Catholic religion." After this, one is sorry to have to add that Mr. MacNutt's account of the matter is quite fantastically inaccurate! Evidently monasticism was a subject he had not studied; he even believed that the monks of the Grande Chartreuse were Cistercians, and was equally at sea in regard to the Queen's doings. How he contrived to misunderstand what he was told as completely as he did seems inexplicable.

To return to the Queen's impressions, it will be seen that the

<sup>1</sup> *A Papal Chamberlain*, 1936, pp. 134, 135.

most enthusiastic were called forth less by the Grande Chartreuse itself, than by the face and bearing of her young subject and compatriot whom she was now about to meet.

The party now reached the Great Cloister, well called so for it is 246 yards long. It is also the oldest part of the monastery, being the only portion that escaped destruction in the great fire of 1676. The late Algar Thorold, who spent six months in 1888 trying his vocation at the Grande Chartreuse, wrote later that his cell "was in the oldest part of the cloister, and only a few doors from the one occupied by a famous monk of the Grande Chartreuse, St. Hugh, whom Englishmen honour as the builder of Lincoln Cathedral."<sup>1</sup>

Carthusian cells open into the cloister, and Dom Edmund now comes to describe the Queen's visit to his cell:

They reached at last the Great Cloister. I was waiting in my cell where everything of course was spick and span. Fr. General rang at my door and then opened it. I went and found the Queen standing on the threshold. Her appearance rather took me aback: it was not at all what I expected it to be. I had seen her only in portraits published in illustrated newspapers, etc., and there she usually appeared as a woman of goodly stature, that is tall rather than short, and with a rather severe, or at least a very serious, countenance. So when I saw before me a short, round, smiling little dame leaning on her cane, I said to myself: "Is *that* the Queen? or is it her lady's maid? . . ." I, however, recovered myself at once and ushered her into my cell. I was forgetting to say that Fr. General told H.M., before reaching the Great Cloister, that he had a subject of hers in his community and asked her if she would like to see him. She, of course, said yes.

So she came into my cell with P. Beatrice, P. Battenberg and Fr. General, while the others waited their turn outside in the Cloister. No one sat down: I had only two chairs to offer them, and besides I knew the visit would not last long. The conversation, such as it was, was carried on standing. I did most of the talking, and I did so purposely in order to avoid embarrassing silences, because I had heard that H.M. on such occasions was not verbose and generally did not find much to say. I gave her a few short explanations concerning the cell, Carthusian life and so on. She listened looking at me and smiling the whole time. She asked my name and remarked

<sup>1</sup> *Dublin Review*, April 1892, "At the Grande Chartreuse," reprinted in the number for July 1936.

on my youthful appearance. I told her I was 23, but I fancy I was looking still younger. Princess Beatrice and Prince Battenberg also put in a word or two. The former made a remark on the beauty of the site and surrounding scenery. Prince B. only asked me what language was usually spoken in the monastery. I rather think my English had got rusty from long disuse and that he had noticed it.

This is very likely. The next year Dom Edmund left the Grande Chartreuse for Parkminster, and on the way there saw two of his near relatives, both of whom commented on his "broken English and outlandish accent"! The present writer, meeting him at Burgos many years later, at once noticed his strong accent, not at all surprising considering that he had then been living for more than thirty years in foreign charterhouses. He goes on:

As Fr. General did not know English, he took no part in the conversation, nor did the circumstances require him to do so. However, before they went out, he went to the window and said to the Queen: "Voilà le jardin." She looked out and down (for the room she was in was on the first floor) and exclaimed, laughing: "Oh! il y a beaucoup de neige." And indeed nothing but snow was to be seen there.

All that lasted no more than ten or fifteen minutes, if I remember well, and then the party went off, Fr. General leading the way to the Library, which was the last place to be seen. On their way there, he said to the Queen: "Well, Madam, you don't find that he looks very unhappy, do you?" "Oh, no!" she said, and then she asked if I belonged to a Catholic family.

We may now quote the Queen's shorter account of the same episode. Though they agree perfectly, the different viewpoints make the versions an interesting contrast. The Queen writes:

We were shown where the cells were, and told I should see a young *compatriote*, an Englishman who had been there for some time. The Grand Prieur unlocked the cell, which is composed of two small rooms, and the young inmate immediately appeared, kneeling down and kissing my hand, and saying, "I am proud to be a subject of your Majesty." The first little room looked comfortable enough, and he had flowers in it. The other contained his bed and two little recesses, in one of which stood a small altar, where he said he performed his devotions and said his prayers. In the other deeper recess, with a small window, is the study, containing his books. I remarked how young he looked, and he answered, "I am 23,"



and that he had been five years in the Grande Chartreuse, having entered at 18!! I asked if he was contented, and he replied without hesitation, "I am very happy." He is very good-looking and tall, with rather a delicate complexion and a beautiful, saintly, almost rapt expression. When we left the cell and were going along the corridor, the Général said I had seen that the young man was quite content, to which I replied that it was a pleasure to see people contented, as it was so often not the case.

Her Majesty's last remark shows her discretion and desire to keep the conversation on a conventional level. There was to be no inquiry into the grounds for happiness in the monastic life! Fr. General still had some more things to show the Queen, but she now pronounced herself tired. She says:

As I felt very tired, I asked not to go up any more stairs, and we turned back and went down again. The General expressed his regret at our visit being so short, but excepting the Refectory and kitchen we had seen everything of real interest. He walked across with us to the Hôtellerie des Dames, only a few hundred yards, where the ladies who wished to see the fine scenery and position often come up to spend a night or two. Here two very friendly Sisters, sort of Soeurs de Charité, welcomed us. Refreshments were prepared in a big room, and here the General took leave of us, but the Procureur remained. He offered me wine, but I asked for some of their liqueur, and by mistake he gave me some of the strongest. Got home, much satisfied with our expedition, at eight. Rather tired.

The Procureur's mistake—if it was one!—was rather amusing, and one wonders how much of the extra strong Chartreuse Her Majesty imbibed before its strength dawned on her. No doubt it added to the very pleasant impression she retained of her visit. The Queen thus briskly finishes off the description of her outing, but Dom Edmund as usual is more leisurely, and mentions two or three details worth recording which she omits:

After admiring the Library, she said she was tired. She was 68 and not robust in health and not used to walk much then. The distance she had just gone on her feet along the never-ending corridors, cloisters, etc., with steps here and there, had been enough for her, and she had had some difficulty in getting up the flight of stone stairs leading to the Library, though leaning all the time on her cane. So they led her straight to the ladies' Guest-house at a short distance from the monastery where a copious "refreshment"



had been prepared for her and her retinue. On passing through one of the halls of the monastery on the way out, Fr. General stopped in front of a good-sized oil-painting, a bird's eye view of Parkminster, our then recently built monastery in Sussex, and explained to the Queen what it was. She looked at it with interest and said she would go one day and visit that charterhouse, the only one there was in her dominions. She appeared not to have known of its existence.

Dom Edmund then notes that the Queen passed close to another prominent oil painting, to which, however, the Prior General did not draw her attention, though in his—Dom Edmund's—view it would have had a far more personal interest for her than the view of Parkminster! This was a portrait of Henry Stuart, commonly known in history as the Cardinal of York. He was a brother to the "Pretender," Charles Edward; when he died in 1807, Dean of the Sacred College, the male line of the royal Stuarts became extinct. The presence of his portrait here is explained by his having been Cardinal-Protector of the Order.

More details about the "light refreshment" are then given:

In the ladies' Guest-house the Queen with her lady-in-waiting and the Prince and Princess were treated to a light repast suitable for the occasion. They took something, but not much. The lunch they had had in their carriage on their way up to the monastery had damped their appetites. The other persons of the retinue did, I believe, more honour to what was served them in one of the halls of the men's Guest-house inside the enclosure. In fact the Queen waited until they had finished before driving off.

Now comes a rather amusing incident, to which, as usual, Dom Edmund does justice. He goes on:

Before leaving, she asked for "a flower" of our mountains to take away with her as a souvenir of her visit. The Sub-Procurator (one of the officials who had received the Queen and her suite) thought she meant a nosegay, and racked his brains to know how and where he was to find flowers in the cell-gardens or anywhere in the "Wilderness" at that season of the year when there was still so much snow in many parts. The Queen's major-domo solved the difficulty by explaining that H.M. wanted a flower *plant* to plant in the royal garden at Windsor. That was easier to get. The Sub. Proc. went to the garden of his cell and dug up an "oeillet d'Inde" (I have forgotten the name in English) and gave it to the

Major-domo roots and all. We learnt later on that it was really planted in the grounds of Windsor Castle and that the Queen was specially solicitous about it and gave orders that every care should be taken of it.

Dom Edmund Gurdon, in his article "The Great Chartreuse" already referred to, devotes a page or more to the wild flowers of the locality, mentioning especially the St. Bruno's lily which is popularly believed to be found in a wild condition nowhere else. The "oeillet d'Inde" (Indian pink) not being a wild flower he, of course, does not mention it.

So ended the Queen's visit to the Grande Chartreuse, but there was to be an agreeable aftermath, one consonant both with royal graciousness and monastic courtesy. Dom Edmund continues:

A few days after the visit Fr. General's secretary received a very courteous letter from General Ponsonby, writing in the Queen's name to express her thanks for the kind welcome we had given her, and asking whether she might send to Fr. General her portrait. She also asked for the photographs and signatures of all the monks who had received her including mine. The General said also: "May I ask you to give the young Englishman the box I am sending. It contains a crucifix which the Queen asks leave to give him."

The box came together with the letter. It was addressed: "*Au Révérend Chartreux Natif d'Angleterre.*" Shortly afterwards Fr. General received from the Queen a donation of 300 francs for the poor and at the same time her portrait. This was a very fine, large, phototyped, full-length portrait of H.M. in her royal robes, and it bore her signature in blue pencil.

Dom Edmund goes on to say that he is convinced that when the Queen had a portrait of this kind taken she must have stood on a stool concealed beneath her skirts and long train, because she always appeared taller than she really was! He says, too, that the portrait was framed and hung up in one of the rooms of the ladies' guest-house. No portraits, however, were sent in return, for:

We had none to give her. Fr. General would have sent her one of me, had I had one of those taken before I joined the Order. But I had none. Besides I knew very well that that would have disappointed her. What she wanted was of course a photo of me in my Carthusian habit such as she had seen me. The day of her visit, however, she had been given an album of photographic views of

the Grande Chartreuse, and the same had been given to the Prince and Princess and, I think, also to General Sir H. Ponsonby and the lady-in-waiting. Moreover, Fr. General having heard from the Curé of Aix-les-Bains that the Queen had told him she had been delighted with her excursion, her visit to the monastery and the way she had been received, and that she had plied him with many questions about the monastery, about the functions of the various officials, and so on, he (Fr. General) sent her through the Curé a copy of the book "*La Grande Chartreuse par un Chartreux*," and another copy was presented to Princess Beatrice.

Finally, Fr. General wrote himself to the Queen to thank her for what she had sent him and at the same time to offer her his congratulations and those of the community for her coming Golden Jubilee.<sup>1</sup> I also wrote to her on my own hook to thank her for the crucifix. As she had expressed the wish to have the signatures of the four officials who together with Fr. General had done her the honours of the house the day of her visit, they added their signatures to that of Fr. General on his letter. Our two letters, enclosed in one envelope, were sent to Windsor where H.M. had returned by that time.

A last word may be added on the subsequent history of the silver crucifix, an old Spanish standing one about eight inches high, sent by the Queen to Dom Edmund. He was allowed to keep it in his cell for a few days, but then the Fr. General asked for it in accordance with the rules of the Order. Before giving it to him, Dom Edmund on a slip of paper wrote the following words: *Regina dedit; Regula abstulit. Sit nomen Domini benedictum!* and gummed it into a hollow place at the foot of the crucifix. When Dom Edmund was ordained priest, rather more than a year later, the Fr. General suggested sending it to his parents; Dom Edmund approved; so it was sent to his father, the late Mr. Philip Gurdon, a convert clergyman, by whose descendants it is still treasured, and has been shown several times to the present writer.

<sup>1</sup> The Fr. General wrote: "Nous sommes heureux d'avoir pu fonder une maison de notre ordre dans vos états, où la Liberté semble s'être réfugiée, et où nous pourrions être appelés à a nos réfugiés nous-mêmes si les temps devenaient plus mauvais. Nous irions alors nous mettre avec pleine confiance sous la haute protection de votre Majesté, comme l'ont fait déjà tant d'autres familles religieuses que l'exil a contraintes de chercher une autre Patrie."

(*Letters of Queen Victoria*, p. 302.)

## REVIEWS

### GENTLEMEN, THE QUEEN

*The Queen's House*, by Compton Mackenzie (Hutchinson 12s 6d).

*The History of the Coronation*, by Lawrence E. Tanner (Pitkin 17s 6d).

*Queens, Crowns and Coronations*, by Lewis Broad (Hutchinson 12s 6d).

HERE ARE THREE BOOKS, whose gay dust-covers make a festive array, two dealing with the Coronation ceremony and the other, by a more practised hand, giving the history of the Queen's House, Buckingham Palace. They are all three welcome—not least on account of the number and excellence of their illustrations, many of them in colour. Perhaps it is only on occasions such as this, at the beginning of a new reign, that we realize fully the enormous debt that we owe to the Royal Family and to the institution of Monarchy as a whole. Nothing else could conceivably take its place. To the chivalrous it is the fulfilment of loyalty; to the adventurous the stimulus to adventure; to the patriotic the essence of patriotic pride, and to the ordinary man and woman, romance. As the poet Allan Ramsay said in that touching tribute which he paid to the titular head of his family:

Dalhousie, of an auld descent,  
my pride, my stoup, my ornament.

So indeed is the sovereign the pride and stoup and ornament of us all.

But he is more than that. Monarchy, as has been said, is after all the only Christian form of government. Heaven, too, is a kingdom. And is there not in the respect shown to any member of the Royal House the shadow of a greater reverence? Can it not be said of the crowds which stand in their thousands under the flood-lit façade of the Palace shouting, "We want the King"—or "the Queen," as they will be shouting on that very spot within a few weeks from now—cannot it be said of them that they are at least on the right road? That, little as they may know it, and unbelievers even though most of them may be, they are nevertheless acclaiming a majesty which, as Bossuet put it, is a reflection of the majesty of God?

So it is right and proper that the true meaning of the coronation rite should be explained, laying special emphasis upon the fact that it is a religious ceremony; although this was made abundantly clear by the Queen herself in a memorable broadcast last Christmas Day. Furthermore, from this all-important aspect, a number of questions arise: What, for example, is precisely the original significance, from the sacramental point of view, of the anointing of a sovereign? How important is it?—e.g., would the abdication of Edward VIII have been

as simple a matter as it was had he already been crowned? How does the coronation of an English king compare with, say, the coronation of the French kings up to Charles X, or with that of a Pope? It cannot be said that on any of these points either of these two books is very illuminating. Mr. Tanner merely says that "the exact spiritual significance of the Anointing . . . was a matter of dispute throughout the Middle Ages." But was it? I don't know. But I would have thought that evidence drawn from both the Bible and Shakespeare placed the matter beyond doubt. Incidentally, it is an interesting comment on the times that not only did that peculiarly *runcible* monarch, William IV, suggest dispensing with a coronation altogether, "for reasons of economy," but that in 1838 *The Times* newspaper should in discussing Queen Victoria's forthcoming coronation, make the following ineffable (and inaccurate as it turned out to be) prognostication: "The Anointing is a part of the ceremony more recommended by antiquity than delicacy, and will probably be omitted altogether." Truly, the Age of Reason died hard. There is one incident which Mr. Tanner quotes from an eyewitness account at the Coronation of George IV: "When the Archbishop preached about the burthens of Royalty, the King was observed to wink at the Duke of York and point to his immense train." Sir Compton Mackenzie may make out the best case he can for George IV as an artist—and moreover he does—but there is something about that *louche* wink exchanged at such a moment between those two old reprobates which, in a flash, reveals Prinny in the round.

*Queens, Crowns and Coronations* is a more popular and less scholarly work, directed mainly towards the edification of younger readers. Mr. Broad speaks euphemistically of "the Protestant Church"; he makes unfortunate use of the noun "job" (e.g., in the course of an apostrophe addressed to the present Queen he writes: "Will you be false to us and the *job* that from us [Her Majesty's ancestors] you have inherited, the greatest hereditary *job* now left on earth?" . . .), and he appears to be under the impression that this is still the "Age of the Common Man." He also is apt to indulge in simplifications, as when he says that "Parry wrote sacred music, Sullivan profane." Which is as unfair to the composer of *Blest pair of Sirens* as it is to the composer of the hymn, *Onward Christian Soldiers*. Both he and Mr. Tanner (in whose book, by the way, Sir Harold Nicolson's name is misspelt on p. 70) are equally convinced that "in all essentials" the Coronation Service has remained unchanged since the time of the Conquest. Wherein they are in error. What is remarkable is to see how, the essentials having changed completely, so much of the outward forms have survived.

Sir Compton Mackenzie and his publishers are to be congratulated



on having produced between them a splendid tribute to the best-known of all the royal residences. The subject in less skilful hands might easily have made heavy reading. But not in Sir Compton's, whose style and wit make even the most formidable obstacles—and there can have been no lack of such—seem non-existent. It is refreshing to read of the "mildewed humbug" left over from the Protectorate, for instance; or of the terraces of Regent's Park referred to as "the nesting ledges of razor-billed bureaucrats." With such seasoning no dish could be other than appetizing. Moreover, he makes no secret of his own likes and dislikes. For while he does something less than justice to Queen Victoria he has a good word for both George IV and Edward VII, and more than a good word for Queen Mary, to which tribute that great lady's subsequent deeply mourned death adds a note of melancholy appropriateness. The illustrations are on a lavish scale and of irreproachable quality.

J. H. F. McEWEN

#### MONARCHY IN EUROPE

*Monarchy in the Twentieth Century*, by Sir Charles Petrie, Bt. (Andrew Dakers 16s 6d).

THE PERIOD COVERED IN THIS VOLUME has been the most disastrous in the whole history of monarchy. More thrones have fallen in it than in any other and only one, that of Greece, has been rebuilt. That monarchy as it existed in medieval times or even as it existed in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries will return to Europe seems improbable, but it would be rash to deny the possibility that it may revive under new forms. So strong has been the monarchical tradition in our own country that Cromwell's son, had he been possessed of more ability, might have anticipated both the Stuart restoration and the Hanoverian succession by mounting the vacant throne as "Richard IV." Sir Charles Petrie is what for want of a more satisfactory term must be called a "legitunist." Not even George III was for him the "legitimate" King of Great Britain though he was recognized as such by all the sovereigns of Europe, including the Pope. It is not clear at what period in Sir Charles's view England re-acquired a legitimate monarch. When, however, in 1917 the reigning house, that of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, changed its name to conceal its German origins he finds in this move "an unworthy concession to popular hysteria," a judgment which is not unjust.

On the whole he takes an optimistic view of the position of the British monarchy, though he would like to see it brought into closer touch with the leaders of thought, as it was in the last century brought into contact with those of commerce and industry. He recognizes,



however, that the disappearance of the remaining Continental monarchies could not fail to have an adverse effect on the position of the British one. One of his enlargements on the benefits of a monarchy seems open to criticism. There is considerable support for the belief that the prime mover in the formation of the National Government in 1931 was not the king but Lord Samuel.

The second half of the book is devoted to "Monarchy Abroad." The period covered is the first half-century in European history in which there is nothing to say about monarchy in France. Of the other countries Spain, on which Sir Charles is an authority, receives the fullest treatment. Of her last king he writes: "He had, over a period of years, made himself so popular in Great Britain and France that it was not realized abroad how isolated he had become in his own country." He over-estimates the effect of the dynastic division of the Spanish monarchists into Carlist and Alfonsist camps. The monarchy would not necessarily have been stronger had it not existed. For many who would have preferred a parliamentary monarchy to a republic would have preferred a parliamentary republic to a "legitimist" monarchy.

Italy, republican in the north and monarchist in the south, has already a monarch in the person of the Pope. The story of the fall of the House of Savoy, at one time the rival of the Papacy, is a complex one. Sir Charles, despite his royalist sympathies, admits that the plebiscite which abolished the monarchy "was conducted fairly." He surely errs, however, in saying that in the spring of 1915 the vast majority of Italians were in favour of a war against Austria. The majority of vocal ones may have been, but had a plebiscite been taken in which women had participated there can be but little doubt that the nation would have voted overwhelmingly for neutrality.

The vicissitudes of the Greek monarchy are narrated in some detail and there seems no doubt that public feeling was against Venizelos in his attempt to prevent the return of George II in 1935. Sir Charles does not tell us whether in his view the influence of the City of London was exerted, as some have held, in favour of a restoration.

The fortunes and misfortunes of the remaining monarchies are dealt with more briefly. Of Russia the author writes "it is necessary to remember that she was not the most easterly of the European powers but the most westerly of the Asiatic states." There is, however, no ethnological barrier between Russia and the West. There is something refreshing about Sir Charles Petrie and this lies in the honesty of his partisanship. He writes of monarchy as an ardent sympathizer with it, not as an impartial student (if such could be found) balancing against each other its merits and demerits. There is in him nothing of

the humbug which leads so many writers to claim freedom from bias when they display it on every page. He rightly points out that it is easier for a king to come forward as the representative of the nation than it is for a president, whether of the American or of the French type, to do so. But does he fully realize the dilemma in which monarchy is now placed? The increasing complexity of society renders it ever more dangerous to trust the navigation of the ship of state to hands whose only qualification is that of hereditary right. If this peril is to be avoided, while some vestiges of the past glories of kingship are to be retained, it can only be by adoption of the British solution of a "hereditary president" of a "crowned republic." On p. 214 "Prince Charles of Sweden" should read "Prince Charles of Denmark."

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

#### CHRISTIANITY IN THE PRESENT AGE

*The Retreat from Christianity in the Modern World*, by J. V. Langmead Casserley, M.A., D.Litt., A.K.C. (Longmans 12s 6d).

*The Christian Dilemma. Catholic Church: Reformation*, by W. H. van de Pol, D.D. Authorized translation by G. van Hall, Ph.D. (Dent 21s).

THAT A RETREAT in some sense from Christianity has been taking place in the modern world is a truth familiar to us all, though the extent of this retreat tends to be obscured by those who reduce Christianity to a few indeterminate moral principles or even speak as though it were identical with "democracy." Professor Langmead Casserley sets out in his book to analyse and discuss this retreat as it has manifested itself during a period covering roughly the last two hundred and fifty years, beginning, that is, with eighteenth-century rationalism and continuing up to the present day. He distinguishes two forms taken by the retreat, namely the retreat into irreligion and the retreat into religion. In the past the "retreat into religion" has often meant the formation of a kind of coterie of the elect, the saved, the only true Christians; and this has not involved the actual and conscious rejection of Christianity. But the underlying thought has been that traditional Christianity is not truly spiritual, and the same thought is manifested by those who in the modern world reject Christianity in favour of some other religion. There are those, for example, who desire to fill the vacuum created by negative irreligion and who turn to some form of mysticism of oriental inspiration, regarding Christianity as over-institutionalized and insufficiently spiritual. But when the author speaks of the retreat from Christianity into religion, he is thinking rather of the substitution for the true God

of idols or pseudo-deities like the State or the Class, often embodied in the person of a quasi-deified leader, which are made the object of worship and which are capable of generating in their devotees a fanaticism akin to the more specifically religious fanaticisms of the past. The phase of negative irreligion is, the author suggests, rapidly drawing to a close. "The vacuum is being filled, and the idols re-erected in the temples, as hideous of countenance and as greedy for the taste of human blood as any of those that once received the homage and devotion of Aztec warriors in ancient Mexico."

The author covers a vast amount of ground, and his book is packed with good things. After an introductory chapter he considers the retreat into irreligion. Here he argues, rightly in my opinion, that the medieval doctrine of contingency was the presupposition and foundation of natural science. For if nature is contingent and could have been otherwise than it is, and if there is then no way of determining its character by purely *a priori* reasoning, it follows that we have to turn to experimental investigation. The author also argues that the so-called "scientific outlook," considered as involving positivism, is not at all warranted by science itself: it is philosophy, not science. In general, he maintains, we cannot build a general philosophy on natural science, taking the conclusions of one science as the premisses of another and different form of knowledge. And at this point Mr. Hoyle comes in for some very hard knocks. Indeed, throughout his book Professor Langmead Casserley does not hesitate to speak very plainly. Thus in the following chapter, on the retreat from Christianity into religion, he speaks of Spiritualism and "Christian Science" as "degraded superstitions," and alludes to "the sordid rise and extraordinary vogue of that peculiarly unpleasant movement known as Jehovah's Witnesses, whose propagandist literature is as nasty to read as to look at." Of the Catholic Church the author speaks with great respect, though in one place he criticizes the use made of definition in recent times.

After chapters on "the ineptitude of modern theology," in which he condemns the substitution of pedantic scholarship for theology, and on "the sufferings of this present time," in which he points out how the crises of the present century have destroyed the complacent and shallow optimism of the past, he considers in the two following chapters "the sociology of the retreat" and "the psychology of the retreat." He speaks of "the industrialized consciousness" and maintains that "the prevailing irreligious culture pattern of the industrial proletariat tends more and more to become the culture pattern of the new middle classes also, as the descendants of the old proletariat press upwards into their ranks." But the author is far from defending a

sociological fatalism. The Roman Empire was christianized, and there is no reason why our own unstable and changing civilization should not be re-christianized. In considering the psychology of the retreat the author maintains that extreme revolutionary opinions are pathological symptoms, and he turns the tables on the sceptics by suggesting that irreligion is frequently the result of wishful thinking.

In his final chapter Professor Langmead Casserley discusses the question whether the modern world has advanced beyond Christianity morally, intellectually or socially. He answers each of these questions in the negative, and what he says is excellent. But it is a short chapter; and one may wish that it had been longer. However, the book is based on the three Maurice Commemoration Lectures which the author gave in 1951 at King's College, London, and it is really not for the reviewer to say that the lectures should have been expanded more than they have been. As it is, the book is an excellent and useful one. Many of the ideas are more or less familiar, it is true, but the author's aim was to give a broad and general survey of the whole field. Such a task was well worth undertaking, and it has been well fulfilled.

All serious-minded Christians realize that one of the great handicaps under which we labour in the work of re-christianizing our civilization is the fact of the divisions among Christians. On the one hand we cannot undo the past. On the other hand we cannot solve the problem by creating an artificial and unstable unity based on theological compromise. Catholics, with their definite conception of revelation and of the nature and function of the Church, obviously could not lend themselves to any such scheme. When Leibniz tried to carry through such a scheme, he failed utterly. But we can try to understand each other; and this is, indeed, an indispensable preliminary to any further step. We can extend a warm welcome, then, to Dr. van de Pol's book, *The Christian Dilemma*. The author, who is now a Catholic priest, possesses a wide experience of the spirit of other Christian bodies and a deep knowledge of their doctrines. He is thus eminently qualified to interpret Catholicism for Protestants and Protestantism for Catholics. He shows a very real sympathy for those who hold different convictions from his own, and he always tries to get at the real meaning of what they think and say. At the same time his own convictions and his position as a Catholic priest are a guarantee against the adoption of any facile and superficial attitude towards the problems of "reunion." This comes out very clearly in the two chapters on the ecumenical movement. Dr. van de Pol is obviously convinced not only of the high-minded idealism of those who participate in this movement but also of the seriousness of their attitude. On the other hand he is well

aware of the reasonableness of the attitude adopted by the Holy See on the matter, and he takes pains to explain the reasons for its adoption.

The author devotes a separate chapter to Anglicanism. The great merit of this chapter is that it is based on a real knowledge of the Anglican Church and on a sympathetic insight into its spirit. He is very far from committing the mistake of identifying Anglicanism with Anglo-Catholicism. And he remarks of some of the Eastern Orthodox and the Old Catholics that "they have misunderstood the true nature of Anglicanism by approaching it through the one-sided view of the Anglo-Catholics." At the same time, when speaking of the "comprehensiveness" of Anglicanism, he declares that "the principle of comprehensiveness does not rest on lack of seriousness and firmness of principle." In his opinion, it is founded on the one hand on the conviction of the mysterious and inscrutable character of God's nature and work and of revelation and on the other hand on the conviction of human limitations, of the diversity of talents and needs, and of the necessity of leaving to men their liberty. I do not mean to imply, of course, that the author accepts or approves of "comprehensiveness" in the Anglican sense; but, whether one agrees with his interpretation or not, it is clear that he is everywhere concerned with avoiding hasty and precipitate judgments proceeding from lack of any real attempt to understand another's position. He sees very well that the understanding of a position and agreement with that position are not the same thing, and that one can have the first without the second. Furthermore, the author is very well aware that while Catholics sometimes misinterpret the mind of non-Catholics, the latter often fail to understand the position of the former and misinterpret the motives of Catholics and the reasons why they act and speak as they do. His book, then, is designed, in the interest of mutual charity, to make mutual understanding easier. And in the fulfilment of this aim we wish it all success.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON

## POETRY AND PROGRESS

*Poets of the English Language*, edited by W. H. Auden and N. H. Pearson. In five volumes (Eyre and Spottiswoode 15s each).

HERE IS ONE OF THOSE EXCITING CHANGES OF ANGLE that transform a familiar scene. The new angle is reflected in the brilliant essays that introduce each volume; gnomic utterances, pregnant with meaning, jostle against tart synopses of recent creative criticism; there is space here only for a few excerpts and abstracts, without comment.



Volume I (Langland to Spenser) represents "that portion of the poetry of Christendom that was written in English." It mirrors "five centuries of uninterrupted humanism" which only the Papacy could have made possible. Its fitting symbol was the establishment of the feast of *Corpus Christi*, because in the medieval world-vision there was no break between the sturdiest affirmations of sense and the highest mysteries of spirit. "When the break came it was drastic. Luther denied any intelligible relation between Faith and Works, Machiavelli any intelligible relation between private and public morality, and Descartes any intelligible relation between Matter and Mind. Allegory became impossible as a literary form, and the human Amor seemed no longer a parable of the Divine Love, but its blasphemous parody." Nevertheless, nostalgia is useless, and mere reaction would be fatal: "that way lies, not the Earthly Paradise, but a totalitarian hell."

Volume II (Marlowe to Marvell) traces the "revolution in sensibility" that accompanied the religious and political changes. Both by Catholics and Protestants the old easy relation between intellect and sense was abandoned in favour of the paradox and the *trompe l'oeil*. Nature became something to be violently mastered or intricately disguised. "The sixteenth century is marked by a revolt against *la donna gentile* and the Motherhood of the Church, in favour of the violent and spectacular male." Hence, perhaps, the rise of drama as distinct from ritual. Elizabethan tragedy plunged the sensitive microcosm of the Morality Play into the blind stark universe of classical drama; its hero must either be a machiavellian success, or a quixotic failure—or Hamlet who falls between both. Hence also, perhaps, the so-called "metaphysical poetry," which may be seen as "the reflection of a peculiar tension between faith and scepticism." As regards the recent popularity of such poetry, a word of warning is added: "too exclusive a taste is always an indiscriminate taste."

In Volume III (Milton to Goldsmith), Milton is happily pigeonholed with the remark that his diction and his idea of the poet as priest had their influence on a later age, the link with his own age being his extraordinary flexibility of syntax. The mark of the new age is "balance" replacing "conflict." Harmony, on the dead level of Deism, is restored between theologians, scientists, and poets. "The slogans are Common Law, Common Sense, Public Spirit." In such a climate, poetic composition ceases to be a mystery. "It is the result of the co-operation of three mental faculties, memory, judgment, and fancy. . . . The first and last of these are private to the individual, but judgment is public and social; judgment is to art what public spirit is to politics, or the laws of Nature to astronomy." Verse of this kind, with its typical form in the heroic couplet, is a better medium than prose for the lucid exposition of ideas. At its worst, it sets some limit



to chaotic rubbish. At its best, in Pope's *Dunciad*, it contributes to civilization "a vision in its own way as original and of as permanent value to the City as Dante's of Paradise, or Wordsworth's of Nature." That is not to deny that: "in personal life, however, the religion of common sense and good taste is seriously defective." A welcome presence in this volume is a long extract from Christopher Smart's *Jubilate Agno*.

Volumes IV and V (Blake to Poe, and Tennyson to Yeats) must be scanted in this notice for lack of space. In Volume IV we see the triumph of self-consciousness as opposed to reason and free-will; in Volume V the beginnings of an awful realization that "to be too conscious is an illness—a real out-and-out illness."

It only remains to say that the purchase of these five volumes is an imperative necessity for any self-respecting educational establishment.

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

#### NATION UNTO NATION

*Hölderlin: His Poems translated, with a critical study, by Michael Hamburger* (The Harvill Press 18s).

*Beowulf: A Verse Translation into Modern English, by Edwin Morgan* (The Hand and Flower Press 12s 6d).

*Il Paradiso di Dante: An English Version, by T. W. Ramsey, with a Foreword by Roy Campbell* (The Hand and Flower Press 18s 6d).

*The Poetry of France: An Anthology with Introduction and Notes, by Alan M. Boase* (Methuen 16s 6d).

SINCE I WROTE about Michael Hamburger's translations of Hölderlin when they first appeared in 1943,<sup>1</sup> I have little to add here apart from welcoming this handsomely produced second edition. The translations show signs of extensive revision—Mr. Hamburger has "now attempted to combine literal fidelity with greater respect for the form of the originals"—and some fourteen extra poems have been included. The alterations sometimes take the form of increased wordiness, which one may regret: thus the line in *Brod und Wein*, VII, "und wozu Dichter in dürftiger Zeit?" is now translated as "and what are poets for in a period of dearth?" whereas the earlier version read "and why poets in desolate times?" But on the whole revision has brought considerable improvement, for Mr. Hamburger is now less afraid of seeming "poetic"—thus in *Patmos* "Die göttlichgebauten Palläste" has been changed from "The sacredly built palaces" to "The god-erected palaces"—and his work sounds less like a decent crib and more like original poetry.

<sup>1</sup> *Scrutiny*, Vol. XII, Nos. 2 and 4.

Of the other two translations I can only give a layman's impressions. They both strike me as being good, cautious work which asks for no special concessions. Edwin Morgan's *Beowulf* takes a place alongside Gavin Bone's (1945, incomplete) as one that can be read and enjoyed at once by the modern reader: "There is no use being faithful to the poetic archaisms of the original if the result cannot be couched in terms acceptable to one's poetic co-readers and co-writers. If it is a case of losing an archaism or losing the poetry, the archaism must go." My general feeling is that Mr. Morgan is more consistent, more even in quality, than Gavin Bone, although he lacks the *trouvailles*, the brilliant compressed images, that lie scattered through the latter's version. Two examples:

Progenitor he was of the miscreations,  
Kobolds and gogmagogs, lemurs and zombies  
And the brood of titans that battled with God  
Ages long; for which he rewarded them. (Morgan)

Of Cain sprang monsters in the woods that walk—  
Time-weary giants, trolls and titans grey,  
Who warred with God and were paid. (Bone)

then may he keen  
In a song of pain, when his boy is hanged  
For the raven's joy. . . . (Morgan)

Lets out his ditty cold,  
A song of his loss, when his son shall, hanging, be  
The raven's gusto. . . . (Bone)

But Bone's translation is occasionally flat in a way that Mr. Morgan's never is; the latter's description of Beowulf,

master of manhood of all mankind,  
Great-framed, greatheart,

is better poetry than the former's

the biggest man for strength in the whole earth,  
—Mighty hard to handle!

Mr. Morgan's version is not very clear at one point (1240/1)—

Many a beer-banqueter  
Bent to his hall-couch for sleep—and no waking  
—since Grendel's mother carries off only one of the company.

We must agree with Mr. Morgan that *Beowulf* in translation needs a stress metre, not a syllabic one, yet we may (in spite of his warning against distortion) still hanker after the effects produced by Gavin Bone's alternating rhyme. But the latter described his as "an unprincipled translation," and I am sure that Mr. Morgan's is sufficiently principled to satisfy scholars, while its lucidity (and the useful introduction and glossary) should recommend it to a wider public as well.

The late T. W. Ramsey employs tercets unrelated by rhyme (i.e., ABA/CDC) as a substitute for Dante's *terza rima*. This has meant a certain loss in musical (and more than musical) continuity, but the triple rhyme is probably undesirable in English, as Roy Campbell suggests, or even impossible over this length. Mr. Ramsey's version is sometimes close to the Temple Classics translation in the choice of words, but comparison of the two brings out a gain in gracefulness in the former without any loss in immediate clarity. Thus:

Caesar I was, Justinian remain;  
By will of the Love that fires me yet I pruned  
The law of things superfluous and vain. (Ramsey)

Caesar I was, and am Justinian, who, by will of the  
Primal Love which now I feel, withdrew from  
out the Laws excess and inefficiency. (Temple Classics)

Mr. Ramsey's fine use of simple language, as free from archaisms as from any deliberate effort to be "contemporary," is apparent in the words of Beatrice (Canto XXIII):

Why does love of my face so overpower  
You that you turn not to the lovely garden  
Which Christ the sun is bringing to full flower?  
There is the Rose in which the word of God  
Made itself flesh; and there tower the lilies  
For whose perfume the narrow way was trod.

It was with propriety that the author asked us to judge this work "as a poem in itself."

Professor Boase gives both precept and example: a serious and thorough historical introduction to French poetry from Chénier to Emmanuel followed by a sizeable anthology. We shall of course find something to complain of—perhaps that Milosz has been left out, that more room is given to Emmanuel than to Michaux, that Eluard's "Une Seule Pensée" (which so protractedly justifies its title) has been included. But the virtues of this selection rise above questions of personal taste: Professor Boase has printed important long poems in their entirety, and has allotted generous space to poets like St.-J. Perse,

whose total output is small but of quality. This book can be warmly, recommended both to general reader and to student.

D. J. ENRIGHT

### THE PLACE OF RESURRECTION

*The Holy Places*, by Evelyn Waugh. With wood engravings by Reynolds Stone. An edition of 950 numbered copies: Nos. 1-50 in full red niger morocco, signed by the author and artist, £3 3s; Nos. 51-950 in red buckram, 15s (The Queen Anne Press, London).

THIS BOOK IS SO PERFECTLY PRODUCED that the highest credit is due to all concerned. The résumé of the history of the Holy Places up to our times is but an outline of the series of books Mr. Waugh had meant to write about the "long, intricate, intimate relations" between England and those shrines. When he reaches his account of Palestine as it is today, we meet with the authentic and incomparable Evelyn Waugh, so serious about what he has seen that his very irony is stripped of too great bitterness. He makes us *see* what, despite earlier writers, we never could have guessed—the mysterious life of the building which contains alike Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre. We feel sure there is nothing like it on earth, and it is he who has made us feel so. As for the future? Even as it is, the Basilica holds up only because of its network of scaffolding and struts. It is bound to fall down and, we think, should be demolished. But who, and what, would ever replace it? Certainly not the perfectly impracticable plan of two Bergamo architects, though patronized by high authority; nor any would-be reproduction of Constantine's basilica, since no one knows what it looked like. The mutually hostile denominations, who now share it, would allow no *one* of them to undertake the task, even if it could be done. Politicians are not interested. Yet Allenby refused to enter Jerusalem save on foot. We can but hope that Mr. Waugh will have put many of us on our knees. After all, the Tomb was also the place of Resurrection.

C. C. MARTINDALE

### LAST OF A TRILOGY

*The Prince of Wales's Feathers*, by David Mathew (Collins 10s 6d).

THOSE WHO KNOW THEIR CARDIFF will have no difficulty in locating the Camilla Street of this novel, and, perhaps, *The Prince of Wales's Feathers*. Not that the stuck-up pub is of much importance in fact or allusion. Wales has nothing to do with Leopard Bay, and little enough with Llanbradach Gardens. Percy is no Prince of Wales, and Amelia's feathers were crumpled from the start. Even the loathsome landlady is anglicized. The curates at St. Michael's could probably have made use of any language other than that for which Wales will

answer, according to prophecy, on the Last Day. They all had their queer experiences, but only one of them had the genius to describe them and transmute the failings and sins of God's disinherited creatures, so that we find ourselves making allowances for everybody except the English crook and the pseudo-Welsh harpy.

Percy is just smarmy—a shade too smarmy to be credible—and we can hardly believe that even Meelie could have been such a mug. Mrs. Roberts is too nasty to be true, and we wonder that Hassan Ali was so easily bullied. Yet as the Candid Camera swings from street to street and from one frowsy interior to another with a precision which calls for development in Inglorious Technicolour, we see the streets and smell the rooms!

Those who know their Clergy List will think that they realize what the future held in store for Canon Molloy. They may even guess what happened to Father McBride. As the title-page lacks the usual disclaimer about reference to real or living persons, they may think what they will. They may be wrong, or only partially right, since the Archbishop, *à la recherche du temps perdu*, may be as composite as Proust.

Of the recent trilogy, this book is, to our mind, the best. And it is the best because one feels that the titular Archbishop and distinguished historian who was once a Cardiff curate loved all his characters except the crook and the landlady.

IVOR DANIEL

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